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Beilin in Tunis, to meet Arafat

Combined agency dispatches

TUNIS — Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin arrived here Monday for multilateral Middle East peace talks and a meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Beilin, the first Israeli minister to officially visit Tunis, was expected to meet Mr. Arafat on Tuesday on the sidelines of multilateral peace talks on refugees.

The refugee committee, one of five multilateral working groups, meets from Tuesday to Thursday.

Mr. Beilin said before leaving Israel that he would meet Mr. Arafat and Tunisian officials.

Mr. Beilin told Israel Radio of his meeting with Mr. Arafat: "There are two things I will surely tell him. One thing is terrorism — it is a very important issue that the PLO make a serious effort not just to prevent PLO terrorism but to influence other Palestinian factions to stop terrorism."

"We know it is hard, we know he doesn't control all of them, but this is surely an issue we must raise."

Mr. Beilin said the second issue was the importance of sticking to the timetable of the peace deal between Israel and the PLO.

"I think the timetable is really important," he said. "Time is pressing. Time works against everyone who wants peace in the Middle East."

Mr. Beilin said he was going to meet Mr. Arafat at the end of the Palestine Central Council (PCC) meeting on approval of the deal.

Mr. Beilin said Sunday Israel is ready to negotiate with the PLO the reunification of Palestinian families divided by the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israel was "ready to negotiate the question of reunification of Palestinian families," he said.

The problem applies mainly to families who have been split by the Israeli occupation. Many families have been torn in half, with one spouse living in the occupied territories and the other living in an Arab country and unable to get a residence permit.

Israel will "make clarifications on this issue which we have never given, and I expect this will contribute in part to reducing tension among Palestinians," said Mr. Beilin.

"It is still too early to talk about numbers," he said. "We will negotiate procedures in Tunis which will allow us to negotiate on the questions of refugees, improvements in their standards of living, and reunifying families."

He rejected once again the right of return of all refugees from the occupied territories. Mr. Beilin's meeting with Mr. Arafat follows Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's talks with the PLO chairman in Cairo last Wednesday.

He told a news conference that Israeli-PLO autonomy talks beginning in Egypt on Wednesday should be wrapped up within two months.

PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, the men who signed the historic peace deal in Washington, will lead their delegations in Cairo.

Mr. Abbas (Abu Mazen) was a key player behind the peace agreement which is fiercely opposed by Palestinian hardliners.

He will head the Palestinian team at the first meeting of the PLO-Israel liaison committee overseeing implementation, said Saeed Kamal, the PLO's ambassador in Cairo.

Mr. Kamal met Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa on Monday and handed over a

(Continued on page 10)



A Palestinian salesman waits Monday for the big business boom expected to come in Jericho at the end of this year when PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat is expected to arrive. While waiting, posters of Mr. Arafat and other Palestinian leaders are to be found at most places (AFP photo)

Clashes in Gaza after Israeli truck kills 3

Combined agency dispatches

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip — Clashes erupted on the Gaza Strip on Monday after an Israeli truck crashed into a bus, killing three Palestinian workers and injuring 45 other people, witnesses and police said.

Troops opened fire and wounded two Palestinian boys aged 13 and 15 in Shatti refugee camp on the edge of Gaza City where shops closed down as news of the crash broke.

Youths in the camp began throwing stones at soldiers and setting tyres ablaze as rumours spread that the crash near the Israeli industrial town of Ashkelon, north of Gaza, had been deliberate.

Twelve of the bus passengers were seriously hurt, as was the truck driver, an Israeli Arab, police said. They were all in Israeli hospitals.

Police sealed off the main road outside Ashkelon for three hours following the accident.

The intifada began on Dec. 9, 1987, two days after a road accident left four Palestinians dead.

Israel will face further attacks in a bid to scupper peace, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres warned Monday, but he pointed out that Palestinians were also committed to

fighting extremism now. "It is almost certain there will be other murderous acts of terrorism to try to torpedo peace," he told parliament at the opening of the winter session.

"That's why Israel is keeping the right to maintain security even during the interim period" of Palestinian autonomy which will be launched in the Gaza Strip and Jericho from Wednesday.

"The enemies of peace wish to bring down the agreement, because their existence depends on a continued state of war," said Mr. Peres after Palestinian opposition to the autonomy deal killed two Israeli hikers on Saturday.

He confirmed he will lead the Israeli delegation to the coordinating committee which meets with the PLO in Cairo on Wednesday to oversee implementation of the peace agreement.

"The will to achieve peace has created a coalition of interests which until now was only a dream. A situation has been created in which Palestinians and not only Israelis will also fight terrorism," he said.

A senior Palestinian leader, after meeting Israel's police minister, said Monday that he expected Israel to ease six-month-old limits on Palestinian

access to occupied Jerusalem.

"I imagine we'll reach agreement on how people can reach Jerusalem and also without making security problems for Israel," Faisal Al Hussein told Israel Radio after meeting Police Minister Moshe Shahal Sunday night.

Palestinian access to the Holy City has been sharply limited since Israel sealed off the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in March to curb attacks on Israelis.

Mr. Shahal said before meeting Mr. Hussein that Israel might ease the restrictions so long as there was no harm to the security of Israelis.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin last week appointed Mr. Shahal and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat to discuss Jerusalem.

Mr. Peres said on Sunday Israel will never agree to "red-vid" Jerusalem.

"We made it clear (to the Palestinians) from the very beginning that Jerusalem is not again on the agenda, that we shall not and we cannot and we will not agree to redvide Jerusalem," he said.

Mr. Peres, speaking to a Jewish women's group from

(Continued on page 10)

Pope, Prince Hassan discuss peace process, Jerusalem

Hurd backs call for support of Jordan's economy

ROME (Petra) — Pope John Paul II received at the Vatican Monday His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and discussed the latest developments in the Middle East peace process and issues related to Jerusalem.

The Pope expressed support for Jordan's efforts to find solutions to the region's problems and to achieve stability.

The Crown Prince raised the issue of a recent Israeli court ruling concerning Al Haram Al Sharif in Jerusalem and briefed the Pope on Jordan's endeavours to safeguard the holy character of the city, noting that the Holy City is of particular importance to the whole world and to all faiths.

The Pope reassured the Vatican's stand vis-a-vis the city of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and voiced the Holy See's appreciation of His Majesty King Hussein's efforts to restore the holy sites and preserve the character of the Holy City.

The Pope and the Crown Prince discussed the role which the Vatican could play towards promoting peace and security in the region.

Prince Hassan said a comprehensive peace should take into consideration humanitarian issues, the development of resources and the settlement of refugee issues, water resources and unemployment.

He said that Jordan had set an example of political pluralism and respect for human rights without discrimination.

The Crown Prince discussed with the Pope freedom of religion and cultures and means of protecting the rights of Muslim minorities. He praised the Pope's support for the cause of Muslims in Bosnia.

Following the meeting, the Pope said the discussions were fruitful and described the Prince's visit as cherishable.

The Prince made a stop in Rome following visits to the United States, and Britain.

In London, Prince Hassan met on Monday with British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and discussed the Middle East peace process and Jordanian-British relations.

(Continued on page 10)

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Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker

Sharif Zeid heading back to Royal Court

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Expectations grew this week that Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker would soon return to active politics by taking his old job as chief of the Royal Court.

Although no official confirmation was available until yesterday, sources indicated that Sharif Zeid would be appointed to head the Royal Court "rather soon," after an absence from active politics of nearly five months, when he resigned as prime minister in May.

Sharif Zeid's return to the Royal Court will be "especially significant" because of what a well-informed source described as "the scattering of political energy" in the country ahead of the national elections on Nov. 8.

Sharif Zeid had occupied the job of chief advisor to His Majesty the King twice before, December 1988, April 89 and December 89 to October 91.

He formed his first government in April 1989 — after Jordan declared its intention to move towards a multi-party system — and oversaw the first fair and free elections in the country since late 1956. He took over the reins of the executive authority again in October 1991 after a confrontation between the government and the Parliament that resulted from traditionalists and the Muslim Brotherhood joining hands to call for the resignation of then Prime Minister Taher Al Masri.

Sharif Zeid's second government was a right-of-centre coalition which largely pacified the opposition on the left and that of the Muslim Brotherhood movement which did not participate in the government but maintained a cordial relationship with the prime minister.

Sharif Zeid resigned his post as premier in May of this year to pave the way for the present government of Dr. Abdul Salam Majali — which amended the electoral law from a bloc voting system to a one-person-one-vote formula and is now preparing for the first multi-party elections in 37 years.

"The respect that Sharif Zeid had gained as head of the coalition government for almost two years would be an asset at this particular time in the country's history," another source said.

"During his tenure as prime minister, Sharif Zeid gained the respect of the left, right and centre to add to his already established ties with the various groups and mainstream Jordanians," the source, who is close to Sharif Zeid, said.

It was not immediately clear to what position the current Royal Court chief, Dr. Khaled Karaki, will be appointed.

(Continued on page 10)

Western powers press U.N. for vote on Libya sanctions

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Britain, France and the United States are pressing the Security Council to stiffen economic sanctions against Libya following Tripoli's latest refusal to deliver two suspects in the 1989 Lockerbie jetliner explosion, diplomats said Monday.

Paris, London and Washington will seek to freeze Libyan financial assets abroad and place an embargo on oil equipment to deprive Libya of pumps, pipeline materials and spare parts for refineries, in addition to the military and air embargo imposed in April 1992.

Western diplomats said China, one of the five permanent Security Council members with veto power, was not expected to exercise its veto and that it was virtually certain that the necessary nine votes could be obtained.

A vote was expected late this week or early next week.

Meetings last week between Libyan Foreign Minister Omar Al Muntasser and U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali

failed to produce an agreement on turning over the two suspects accused of blowing up a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988, killing 270 people.

France is also seeking to question at least two Libyans in connection with the blowing up of a French UTA airliner over Niger in 1989 in which 170 people died.

In Tripoli, defence lawyers for the two Libyans said the men would be unable to receive a fair trial in Britain or the United States.

After a two-day meeting in Tripoli, which the suspects on occasion attended, the lawyers rejected as "unacceptable" a Libyan government statement earlier this month encouraging the men to stand trial in Scotland if they wished.

The defence team is headed by Libyan lawyer Ibrahim Legwell, and includes 12 other lawyers from the United States, Britain, Germany, Switzerland and Malta, as well as a number of legal advisers.

It said it planned to contact

Oakley pursues Somalia mission

Combined agency dispatches

MOGADISHU — U.S. special envoy to Somalia Robert Oakley met a representative of the clan of Mogadishu warlord Mohammed Farah Aideded Monday as he pursued efforts to reach a peace settlement with General Aideded's faction.

Mr. Oakley had talks with Ahmad Rage of Gen. Aideded's Habr Gedir clan, sources close to the negotiators said.

They could not say when the U.S. envoy would meet an official of Gen. Aideded's Somali National Alliance (SNA) who could speak for the faction leader.

Washington has ruled out direct talks with the fugitive Somali chief, wanted for attacks on U.N. peacekeeping troops, but U.S. President Bill Clinton sent Mr. Oakley back to Somalia last week to help seek a political solution after weeks of escalating warfare.

On Monday, the former U.S. ambassador to Somalia met Mario Scialoja, the current ambassador from Italy, which had strongly criticised the tough military line taken against Gen. Aideded by the United States and U.N.

Mediators from Ethiopia and Eritrea also pursued talks with representatives of the SNA, the United States and the U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), informed sources said. But they would give no details.

"We have nothing to say to the press at this time," spokesmen for the U.N. embassy have said since Sunday.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali plans to meet next week in Ethiopia with African and Arab leaders on a plan to keep Somalia from slipping back into anarchy after the withdrawal of U.S. troops, announced by Mr. Clinton for next March 31.

But a source close to the negotiators here Monday said Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa had been "pre-mature" on Sunday in announcing that all Somali factions, including Gen. Aideded's, would meet in Addis Ababa that day.

Cairo's Al Akhbar newspaper said the meeting would be attended by Mr. Zenawi, Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki and President Mubarak.

Mr. Oakley stopped in Ethiopia on his way to Somalia on the weekend.

Diplomats said he was asking Mr. Meles to broker a ceasefire with Gen. Aideded and to organise an investigation of the June massacre of Pakistani peacekeepers.

Gen. Aideded is accused of ordering. Mr. Musa said President Mubarak would discuss the crisis in Somalia with Dr. Ghali who was due in Cairo on Thursday.

The Oct. 20 meeting, sponsored by the OAU, is intended to breathe new life into a peace pact and political deal cut among rival Somali factions in the Ethiopian capital last March.

But the peacekeeping and humanitarian activities of UN

(Continued on page 10)

Yeltsin begins visit to Japan on sour note over islands

Combined agency dispatches

TOKYO — Russian president Boris Yeltsin, seeking to leave his domestic woes behind, arrived in Tokyo Monday only to find more problems awaiting him as Japanese anger clouded the start of his first state visit here.

The mood had soured even before Mr. Yeltsin's plane had left the Moscow tarmac, after he made controversial remarks in a departure statement.

The brawny Russian president said he hoped his hosts would not "ruin the trip and once again halt economic cooperation" because of a near 50-year-old territorial dispute.

The remarks clearly angered the Japanese government, which threw its support behind Mr. Yeltsin in the battle against foes in Moscow that ended last week with the loss of more than 100 lives in the storming of parliament.

Mr. Yeltsin's outspoken comments, broadcast on radio and television news bulletins here, drew a swift and uncharacteristically blunt response.

A senior Foreign Ministry official, who asked not to be named, said: "these remarks ignore mutual understandings that territorial issues should be debated. It is impolite."

A Foreign Ministry source asked that if Mr. Yeltsin felt

that way over a key dispute, "what is the purpose of his visit here?"

The strong language reflected the depth of popular feeling in Japan over the loss of four islands of the Kuril chain to the Soviet Union at the end of World War II.

On arrival, Mr. Yeltsin told journalists he hoped for a "fruitful" visit but avoided commenting on his earlier remarks.

"I hope that this time we will map out a strategy for cooperation between Japan and Russia which unfortunately could have been bitter in the last few years," he said.

He stressed the importance of economic ties and said 17 agreements would be signed during the visit, showing the "large" spectrum of cooperation.

But given his departure statement, Mr. Yeltsin clearly fears that Japan will once more raise the issue of the sovereignty of the islands. Japan has been withholding major aid to the former Soviet Union until the two countries resolve the dispute, which has prevented the signing of a peace treaty.

Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa has said he does not wish to press Mr. Yeltsin too hard over the dispute, because of his "domestic

problems. Hardliners at home are strongly opposed to any appeasement of Japan's territorial demands."

The Russian president's comments cast a premature shadow over two rounds of talks he is to have here with Mr. Hosokawa on Tuesday and Wednesday before returning later the same day to Moscow, after a shortened visit of only 36 hours.

As he left Moscow for Tokyo, he said his foes were locked up securely in a "mighty fortress" and he feared no new mutiny in his absence.

"Beyond any doubt, the situation is under control," he told journalists at a Moscow airport before leaving for Japan.

"I leave, true enough for a short time, only a day and a half, but I have no hesitations. Those who... kicked up the storm are now locked up in a mighty fortress from which no one has escaped," he said.

Mr. Yeltsin, looking calm and relaxed, left a capital still in the grips of a state of emergency. But most of his militant enemies are now in Moscow's Lefortovo prison or effectively barred from media closely monitored by the president.

Hariri: Israel-Lebanon peace must include Syria

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri of Lebanon has been quoted as saying Syrian and Lebanese interests were so intertwined that a peace accord with Israel had to involve both countries at once.

Mr. Hariri also told the latest edition of Newsweek International that Israel must be prepared to pull out completely from the Golan Heights in order to keep the shaky peace process on track.

"Lebanon will not sign a peace treaty with Israel if Syria is not involved, and Syria will do the same, because our national interests are very much linked together," Mr. Hariri told the magazine.

Mr. Hariri said President Hafez Al Assad of Syria was now "a peace believer," but he stressed Mr. Assad would accept nothing less than full return of the Golan Heights. He told Newsweek that so far Palestinians opposed to last month's peace deal with Israel did not enjoy the backing of any regional governments, but he warned that any foot-dragging by Israel could change that.

"If Israel is not serious about withdrawing from the Golan Heights, things will start deteriorating," Mr. Hariri said, adding that delays in a settlement with Syria and Lebanon would only crystallise opposition to peace.

"(Assad) wants to put the Syrian flag in all the Golan Heights. All of it and not one kilometre less. I think this is very, very important for him." At the same time, Washington must step up its own activity on behalf of the peace talks, Mr. Hariri said, including shuttle diplomacy by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

"The Americans have to move very quickly to accelerate the peace process," he said.

Meanwhile, Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Bouze said Israel could reach outline peace agreements with Lebanon and Syria by the end of the year.

The agreements would be framed in "declarations of principles or intentions," Mr. Bouze told Voice of Lebanon radio in an interview carried by Sunday's newspapers.

Mr. Bouze, who met Mr. Christopher in Washington Friday, said State Department Middle East peace coordinator Dennis Ross would visit the region soon to prepare the ground for the agreements, which would be announced by the end of the year.

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed a declaration of principles on limited Palestinian autonomy on Sept. 13 and it goes into effect on Wednesday.

Jordan and Israel also signed a peace agenda last month. However, talks between

Israel, Lebanon and Syria have been bogged down since the peace process was launched in Madrid in October 1991.

Syria has some 40,000 troops stationed in Lebanon, which closely follows the Damascus line.

Mr. Bouze said Lebanon would "welcome favourably" an Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon before any Israeli pull back from the Golan Heights.

Lebanon wants Israel unconditionally to withdraw from the "security zone" it holds along the southern border.

Mr. Bouze said that the American administration believed that there had to be progress on the Syrian and Lebanese fronts for Israel and the PLO to finalise their agreement.

According to political sources here, Lebanon rejected a U.S. proposal that Israel withdraw from South Lebanon in a timetable depending on a complete halt to guerrilla attacks, which are led by the pro-Iranian Hizbollah.

Beirut has no control over the anti-Israeli resistance, which is a trump card held by Syria.

A senior Egyptian official said Sunday he believed Israel and Syria could reach a peace agreement by next spring, and that Israel accepted this would involve a total withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Osama Al Baz, senior political adviser to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, told a lunch with Reuters Middle East correspondents that Israel should not delay progress with Syria while it fleshed out the peace deal with the Palestinians.

"We will have to convince Israel of the necessity and advisability and the lack of risk involved here in moving on the Syrian front simultaneously," Dr. Baz said.

"We are optimistic. One would be open not only to dream but to anticipate that an agreement can be reached between the Syrians and the Israelis by next spring," he added.

"I don't know whether March or April. I don't like to read in crystal balls. But if our predictions were right in the past I would say that this is achievable in this short period of time," Dr. Baz said.

Dr. Baz said he thought about "two months" work remained to be done to complete accords between Israel and Lebanon.

Asked whether he believed Israel accepted that it would have to withdraw totally from the Golan Heights to achieve peace with Syria, Dr. Baz said:

"Yes, because they know this is a condition sine qua non. If they don't do it, that means they are keeping a state of war with a major Arab neighbour and that can result in the future in spoiling whatever

agreement is reached with other parties."

"It is very hard for me to imagine the Palestinians, the Lebanese and the Jordanians normalising with Israel while the Syrian issue is frozen," he added. "So it is inevitable for Israel to withdraw."

Dr. Baz cautioned that Israel had never promised a full withdrawal either publicly or privately. An Egyptian magazine interview with Mr. Mubarak last month suggested that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had told him Israel was ready for a full withdrawal but officials later said this was not so.

Dr. Baz suggested that a Syrian-Israeli deal could be modelled on Egypt's peace treaty with Israel, in which the Jewish state withdrew from all Egyptian territory occupied in 1967 in return for full normalisation of relations, but he said flexibility might be needed on the timetable.

"On the sticking points of full withdrawal in exchange for full peace, I believe it can be worked out. This might need a flexible schedule in terms of implementation," Dr. Baz said.

He said he expected a new round of Middle East peace talks to be convened in Washington in November. The Palestinians and Israelis are due to hold additional talks beginning on Oct. 13 in Cairo and the Red Sea resort of Tabá.

Israeli allies attacked

Pro-Iranian guerrillas attacked three posts of Israel's militia allies in South Lebanon Monday, security sources said.

Hizbollah guerrillas fired machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and mortar bombs at two South Lebanon Army (SLA) posts in the Braichit area on the edge of Israel's unilateral "security zone," they said.

There were no immediate reports of casualties. Earlier on Monday, Hizbollah (Party of God) guerrillas directed machine gun and mortar fire at the SLA post on the Tuhra hills, they said.

Israeli and SLA gunners hit back with artillery and machinegun fire on several guerrilla-held villages north of the zone, wounding a 70-year-old Lebanese woman, the sources said.

"Israeli planes staged mock raids over Iqim Al Toufah ridge, a Hizbollah bastion north of the zone."

Palestinian and pro-Iranian Lebanese groups have said they will step up attacks on Israel to sabotage the Israel-PLO agreement.

The groups launched more than 30 attacks against the "security zone" and twice tried but failed to infiltrate northern Israel.

Egyptian militants step up war

CAIRO (Agencies) — Suspected Muslim militants shot and killed a policeman as he left his house in southern Egypt early on Monday, security sources said.

They said the men fired a pistol at Mohammad Othman Hariri, 45, as he left his house in the village of Arab Faza in Al Qusiya town, 300 kilometres south of Cairo.

Several bullets hit his head and he died in hospital, the sources added.

The militant Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group) is believed to have killed 34 other policemen in southern Egypt since it began its violent campaign in March 1992 to eject the Egyptian government and replace it with a purely Islamic one.

More than 200 people have died and over 500 have been wounded in militant-related violence in the past 19 months. Al Gamaa Sunday claimed responsibility for an attack the previous day which wounded a senior military prosecutor.

In a statement, it said the attack was in revenge for death penalties given out by military tribunals to Islamic militants, and warned: "All members of military tribunals are targets for the armed wings of Gamaa."

Lieutenant Colonel Taha Al Sayed Taha was wounded in the abdomen and shoulder Saturday when three gunmen opened fire on him as he left his home in the Cairo residential area of Heliopolis.

Col. Taha, chief military prosecutor for eastern Cairo, has been presiding over one of

four ongoing trials of the Vanguard of the Conquest, an outlawed group which, like the Gamaa, is accused of trying to overthrow the secular government.

The attackers were "carrying out orders given to all the armed factions (of the group) to avenge themselves on everyone who has participated in the murder of a Muslim," the statement said.

Since December, 27 people have been sentenced to death by military tribunals, and 15 executions have been carried out.

The group also urged soldiers not to participate in military tribunals. If they did, they would be committing "capital crimes which can only be wiped out by the blood of vengeance," it warned.

President Hosni Mubarak shifted trials of Islamic militants to military tribunals from the civil justice system last year in an attempt to speed up convictions.

Critics attack Mubarak

Three critics of President Mubarak, interrogated for three days on charges of insulting him, went back on the offensive Sunday after their release, saying they would not be gagged.

"President Mubarak is not a king whose status is untouchable. He is not God," said Helmi Murad, vice-president of the Socialist Labour Party (SLP). "It is not normal to be accused of insulting the president every time we demand constitutional reforms and more democracy."

Jericho land deals soar

JERICHO (R) — Property values have soared 500 per cent in this sleepy oasis town on news that it will be the first seat of Palestinian power in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

"If someone wants to get married he can find five or six girls — but not one house," Jericho land dealer Nasser Salah said.

Mr. Salah closed an unprecedented 20 deals in three weeks. His chief customers were Palestinians from the West Bank and occupied Gaza Strip banking on a peace dividend.

Under an interim Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) deal that takes effect on Wednesday, Palestinian self-rule will be enacted first in Jericho and the Gaza Strip. Israel must begin pulling out troops by December.

Jericho officials view their tourism and farming town of 17,000 as the seat of Palestinian power — at least until a permanent settlement is due to take hold in the occupied lands in five years.

"The rise in prices has been fantastic," businessman Amin Al Rimawi said. "They have gone up at a rate of 500 per cent or more for buildings and businesses in the centre of town."

Dealers say a quarter of an acre in outlying areas has tripled in value to \$21,000.

Still many prospective clients are holding back, waiting for details of the peace deal to be ironed out. Talk of grand projects abounds but little construction is seen.

Two developments could change the face of the town — the arrival of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, other PLO officials and their families and the possible influx of refugees who will need to be resettled.

Mr. Arafat is due to arrive in January, and the PLO is negotiating the three-year rental of the town's only hotel with Rajai Abdo, its general manager.

The organisation hopes to turn the decaying 63-room Hisham Palace Hotel downtown into a renovated headquarters. A Spanish company has been contracted for the job.

"Jericho today is different," said Mr. Abdo, who is also a Muslim religious leader. "I see people with hope, stores full of merchandise, real estate skyrocketing. The buyers have hope."

Mr. Arafat has yet to rent a house for himself and his wife, but landlords are vying for the honour, and five or six villas are rumoured to be under con-

Palestinians lack vital data ahead of autonomy negotiations

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Palestinians go into talks with the Israeli military authorities on Wednesday, lacking even the most basic data to enable them to plan for running their own affairs.

"We don't even know how many people there are in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, because it is the Israelis who have the register," said Hassan Abu Libdeh, 39, the deputy chairman of the technical committees charged with setting up the autonomous administration.

Mr. Libdeh, a lecturer in mathematics and statistics at Bir Zeit University, added: "The Israelis tell us the hand-over of data is negotiable, but we are hoping they will hand

them over unconditionally." For the time being, we are making plans on the basis of estimates and figures published in Israeli or international magazines," he said.

A spokesman for the Israeli military government, Colonel Hanan Robin, confirmed Mr. Abu Libdeh's statement. "Until the agreement with the PLO, we had no one to talk to because the Palestinians refused to envisage the transfer of some responsibilities," he told AFP.

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed an agreement on Sept. 13 in Washington on autonomy for the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho. The agreement

goes into effect on Wednesday. The agreement requires the Israeli military authorities to transfer competence for health, education, taxation, tourism and social services to the autonomous Palestinian administrations as soon as possible.

Col. Robin said these issues along with a timetable for the handover would be discussed at talks scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday in Tabá on the Red Sea.

The Israel-PLO committee charged with implementing the autonomy agreement would also discuss details of Israel's military pullout from Gaza and from Jericho where the autonomous regime will be set up first.

"Once a timetable has been worked out, we can get down to serious discussion on handing over responsibilities and we will then provide them with all the information they need," Col. Robin said.

According to Palestinian sources, experts will begin meeting representatives of the military government in the occupied territories this week to discuss the technical details of the handover.

Mr. Abu Libdeh said the main priority for Palestinians was housing. "Our priority is housing, housing, housing... and employment," he said. "The situation is dreadful. There are an average of nine people per house in Gaza and 7.5 in the West Bank."

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Le Monde Sous Marin
18:30 Beantanoir
19:00 News in French
19:15 Varieties
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 People Next Door
21:00 The Outsider
22:00 News in English
22:30 Philadelpia Story

PRAYER TIMES

04:15 Fajr
05:32 (Sunrise) Duha
11:22 Dhuhur
14:39 'Asr
17:12 Maghrib
18:29 'Isha

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St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 843238
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684193
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Unstable weather conditions will prevail. It will be dusty with clouds appearing at different altitudes and there is a chance of thunder showers. Winds will be northerly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be dusty, partly cloudy with a chance of thunder showers. Winds will be northerly moderate as sea calm.

AMMAN

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 16 / 29
Aqaba 21 / 34
Dead Sea 14 / 32
Jordan Valley 20 / 35

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 29.4, Aqaba 33. Humidity readings:
Amman 25 per cent, Aqaba 45 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Hindi 898787
Dr. Ruteh Zaitoun 898985
Dr. Mohammad Al Abdull 778559
Dr. Nidal Al Dulh 827195
Firdous pharmacy 651912
Firdous pharmacy 778336
Al Azema pharmacy 637035
Nairoh pharmacy 636762
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shimshi pharmacy 637660
Nairoh pharmacy 636762
Najib pharmacy 847632

IBRD:

Dr. Mazen Sharari 248056
Alqada pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Azmi Salata 544989
Khalifah pharmacy 958417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630441
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 73121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111

ZARQA:

Dr. Azmi Salata 544989
Khalifah pharmacy 958417

Water Authority

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636361
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussain Medical Centre 813613/32
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/8
Alkhal Maternity, J. Amn 64441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 664714
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 645845
Al-Musader Hospital 672279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Basir, J. Ashrafieh 757112/8
Army, Marfa 891617/5
Queen Alia Hospital 686100
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

ZARQA NATIONAL HOSPITAL

09/900560
Bin Slim Hospital (09)960732
Al-Hilwa Modern Hospital (09)99999
IBRD:
Princess Banaa Hospital (02)77555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)77275
Bin Al-Nadim Hospital (02)97100
AQA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)31111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
04:30 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:30 Damascus (RJ)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bahrain firm on dispute with Qatar

MANAMA (R) — Bahrain renewed a call on Qatar to submit a joint application to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for a ruling on a territorial dispute between the two Gulf states. Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad Bin Mubarak Al Khalifa said in remarks published Sunday: "Bahrain's position has not changed. It calls on both states to submit a joint application to the ICJ through a special agreement between them." He told the Saudi-owned daily Al Hayat: "We hope to settle the issue in brotherly ways if possible, or through internationally-recognised way." He added: "Bahrain will not accept the ICJ ruling unless the two countries submit a joint application." Qatar went alone to the court in July 1992, asking it to decide on its claim to a number of barren but potentially oil and gas-rich Gulf islands, sandbanks and reefs. Bahrain controls the territory under a border demarcation decided when Britain handled the foreign affairs of the two states in the 1930s. Bahrain has always maintained that the two sides should go together to the Hague. Qatar wants to limit the case to its claim to the islands and reefs. Bahrain wants to include fishing and pearling areas and part of the Qatar mainland around the northwestern town of Zabara.

Iranian girl says Prophet's daughter visits her

TEHRAN (R) — An Iranian girl who claims the Prophet Mohammad's daughter has visited her repeatedly was moved from her home for fear a rush of visitors would spark violence. Tehran's Jonhoni Islami newspaper said Sunday many people had flocked to Jafarabad village in western Iran to see the 16-year-old girl, who says the Prophet's daughter Zahra visited her several times. "Officials acted in time and transferred the girl from the village for further investigations and stopped a rush of people and prevented possible disturbances," the newspaper said. "There seems to be a conspiracy to weaken religious beliefs through such absurd claims," it added. Last July an old woman's claim of having seen the Prophet's grandson in the town of Mobarakeh near Isfahan led to bloody clashes with the police who arrested 500 people. The senior ayatollah rejected the woman's claim as baseless.

U.N. gas experts in Iraq need two months

BAGHDAD (R) — United Nations arms experts, running behind schedule, need about two more months to finish the destruction of Iraq's stockpiles of poisonous gases, a U.N. source said Monday. "It seems they will have to work two months more. The main bulk has been done," said the source, who asked not to be named. U.N. inspectors said last July that if all went well Iraq's known arsenal of toxic gases would be destroyed by September. About 25 experts of a U.N. chemical destruction team supervise the scrapping of Iraq's chemical arsenal under the terms that ended the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait. The source said the experts were facing unspecified problems. "It is so big a project. They (the experts) still need to finish mustard gas," he said. The chemical weapons stocks were concentrated at Muthana, 130 kilometres northwest of Baghdad, where a hydrolysis plant to neutralise the nerve agents and an incinerator to burn mustard gas were built. U.N. inspectors said last July that they neutralised all Iraq's nerve agents.

Mubarak to meet Clinton on Oct. 25

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak is to meet President Bill Clinton in Washington on Oct. 25, the official Al-Ahram daily said Sunday. The talks will focus on the Middle East peace process, particularly on Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese relations, as well as ways to implement an accord signed on Sept. 13 between the Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on limited autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, the paper said.

Norway's U.N. soldiers in Somalia resign

OSLO (R) — Most of the 133 Norwegians serving with the U.N. force in Somalia resigned in an unprecedented protest Sunday, saying their pay was too low for an increasingly dangerous job. "They say that the money doesn't compensate for the risks," said Stig Morten Karlsen, a spokesman for Norway's defence command. "This is the first time we've had such resignations." Mr. Karlsen said that at least 117 Norwegians, most of them volunteer part-time soldiers ranging in rank from private to major, had resigned. But he added: "The resignations are not as dramatic as they sound." The 133-strong company had been due to leave Somalia on Oct. 27 and their contracts required at least 30 days' notice of termination. Believing that about half would want to renew their contracts, Norway had planned to send only 60 fresh soldiers at the end of the month as part of a normal rotation. Mr. Karlsen said none of the replacements had shown any sign of joining the protest but it would take a month and a half before 60 more were ready for duty. He said the 117 who were resigning had demanded 8,000 crowns (\$118) a month pay to compensate for the risks — almost double the current 4,200 (\$60) high-risk pay. Mr. Karlsen said the troops had recently received wage rises and extra fringe benefits.

Norwegian publisher of Rushdie book shot

OSLO (AFP) — The Norwegian publisher of British author Salman Rushdie's controversial novel "Satanic Verses" was shot and seriously wounded outside his home in Oslo Monday. Mr. Rushdie was later described as "devastated" by news of the attack. Amanda Hopkinson, a member of the Rushdie support committee in London, said the author "realised that the attack was really meant for him." The late Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued a death sentence against Mr. Rushdie in 1989, arguing that his book was blasphemous. William Nygaard, owner and managing director of Aschehoug Forlag publishing house, was hit by three bullets Monday, at least one of which lodged in his back. He later underwent an emergency operation in hospital. A hospital spokesman said Mr. Nygaard's condition was "serious, but ... stable" after two bullets had been removed from him, according to the national news agency NTB.

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

13:15 Cairo (MS)
13:30 Vienna (OS)
17:45 Dubai (A2)
06:30 Bucharest (RO)

RIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Saturday
Arr. Amman 5:30 p.m. every Saturday

MARKET PRICES

Upperflower price in ffs per kg.
Apple 850/550
Banana 680
Banana (Mukdaman) 620
Beans 800 / 500
Cabbage 150 / 90
Carrot 440/430
Cauliflower 350 / 250
Cucumbers (large) 200 / 150
Cucumbers (small) 360 / 260
Eggplant 280 / 200
Garlic 1000 / 600
Grapes 380/240
Guava 220 / 150
Lemon 220 / 160
Marrow (large) 200 / 150
Marrow (small) 400 / 300
Mushrooms 240 / 170
Onion (dry) 250 / 200
Pepper (hot) 280 / 200
Pepper (sweet) 280 / 200
Potato 400 / 300
Tomato 130 / 80
Spinach 360 / 240

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:30 Aqaba (RJ)
08:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:00 Vienna (RJ)
11:15 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
11:45 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
11:50 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
12:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
12:45 Cairo (RJ)
12:55 London (RJ)
13:00 Madrid (RJ)
13:30 Jeddah (RJ)
21:15 Larissa (RJ)
21:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai

By Rami G. Khouri

Jordan Times

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Small is beautiful

THE MAYOR of Amman, Mamdouh Abbadi, was recently quoted in a newspaper interview as saying that he would like to incorporate Zarqa and Salt in the Greater Amman region. Another weekly quoted "reliable" sources as saying that Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali was in favour of such a move. Both Abbadi and Majali advocates of such incorporation would most probably like to see Zarqa and Salt turned as clean and organised as Amman. Some enthusiasts say that the rich of Amman should share in improving the two towns whose inhabitants service the capital. They say Amman, which collects the highest taxes and rates from big businesses that employ the people of Zarqa and Salt, should contribute to the welfare of the two towns. The proponents of such an idea also say that pooling the resources of the whole region together would help the authorities provide better planning, resource-sharing, capital investment, and management of water and waste.

What the advocates forget or choose to overlook is the fact that such a big body that has under its authority more than half of Jordan's population would stumble in its own sheer size. No matter how efficient the management that will take over this region is, and for the time being it is not, its area of responsibility will be awesome and it will be prone to corruption.

Especially awkward is the fact that the Greater Amman Municipal Council is an appointed rather than an elected one. The idea in itself might not be bad. But the mechanism must be thought over. The present Greater Amman Municipality should be re-divided into its original components. Each town or township should be allowed to elect its own mayoral council. An overall authority that would take care of providing all the services would be formulated of all heads of municipal councils who then would preside over a regional authority that would aim at contracting the private sector to provide the basic services of street maintenance and garbage and waste disposal. The idea of a Greater Amman region as it is being presented defies the government intent to decentralise as campaigned by the prime minister. What the recent past has shown and proven right is that "small is beautiful" and "might is not right."

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'i daily Monday attacked the Israeli court ruling that paved the way for the extremists among the Zionists of Israel to tamper with the Islamic holy places in Jerusalem as a new form of aggression and part of a long chain of illegal practices against the Arab and Islamic heritage. Indeed, the court ruling is considered as a continuation of Israel's acts of aggression on Arab lands and a desecration of the holy shrines, a process that has been going on since the start of the occupation of the Islamic and Christian holy places, said the paper. Jordan's moves to alert the world community's attention to these atrocities is also designed to expose the real nature of the Zionist leaders who are bent on undermining all efforts towards peace, added the paper. By insisting that Jerusalem will remain for ever the united capital of Israel, following the unlawful annexation of the Arab part in 1967, Israel is telling the world that it adamantly refuses to comply with the requirements of the international legitimacy, charged the paper. There is no doubt, said Al Ra'i, that Jordan will pursue all efforts and at all levels to abort Israel's moves and foil its measures taken at the holy shrines and, said the paper, it is the duty of the world community to see to it that Israel is prevented from committing such acts of sacrilege in the Holy Land.

TAHER AL Udwan, a columnist in Al Dustour, discussed water in the Middle East, warning that water resources could be a source of future regional conflicts unless proper measures are taken immediately. Noting that Turkey had offered to supply Syria, Israel and Jordan with water through pipes linking these countries and that Iran had offered to supply water to the states in the Gulf, the writer said that such offers bear the seeds of future danger since they place the Arab Nation at the mercy of foreign nations. Depending on non-Arab sources for water is tantamount to sowing the seeds of discord that could escalate into conflicts later on, added the writer. It is incumbent upon the Arab countries, said the writer, to transcend their present differences and study all their potentials and deal with this important issue before the end of the present century when, experts say, the problem would aggravate to a great extent. Offering ideas for solving the water resources issue, the writer said that desalination of sea water, proper utilisation of the River Nile and sound and economic exploitation of water resources available in the Arab World should be taken into consideration. Cooperation with Turkey is also a must and agreements could be reached with this country towards fair sharing of the river waters, added Udwan. At the moment, he concluded, Arab states ought to give due attention to replacing depleted water networks, halting any excessive use or wastage of water resources.

The View from Fourth Circle

Somalia, Clinton, ghosts and new world order signposts

The events in Somalia during the past week are unfortunate, but instructive. The underlying forces at work should be carefully assessed for their implications for future developments in this and other areas of the world, as we make our way through the early years of the "new world order" and come to grips with the role of the United States and the United Nations in local conflicts around the world.

The fundamental dilemma in Somalia is not about intentions — for the initial aim last December of delivering humanitarian aid to starving Somalia was widely applauded around the world. The dilemma is about perceptions — specifically, the perception of the United States of its own political and military role abroad and its perception of the rights and value of Third World cultures such as that of the Somalis.

The unfortunate fact is that the initial positive intention of promoting humanitarian aid, peace-making and national reconstruction in Somalia via the United Nations has been transformed into a struggle over the self-perceptions of the United States and the people of Somalia. The initial focus on global humanitarian activism delivered via the United Nations to help the Somalis has also been turned into a domestic American discussion of the appropriate deployment of U.S. military power to slay the still operative ghost of the U.S. experience in Vietnam. An opportunity to forge a constructive precedent for new world order multilateral humanitarianism has been set back — but not totally denied — by a wasteful political and psychological retreat into old world order American provincialism and militarism.

Behind the death and suffering of Somalis, Americans, Pakistanis and other actors in Somalia, the big loser in this conflict is the role of the United Nations as an agent for peace and human dignity in conflict situations around the Third World. This is not totally new, for we witnessed the start of this unfortunate process in the Gulf crisis, when the United Nations allowed itself to be commandeered by the United States as a convenient and willing instrument of three destructive American forces: overpowering militarism, deep ignorance and insensitivity to the human and national rights of people in the south, and a quasi-racist American self-perception of the primacy of American humanity over the humanity of other peoples.

This did not have to happen, for early on in the mission the U.S. participated wisely in the effort to forge a diplomatic and political resolution to the collapse of governance in Somalia, via the round-table talks in Ethiopia. The current dilemma escalated at a point several months ago when the lack of clarity about the precise mission of U.S. and U.N. forces in Somalia was aggravated by the self-generated imperative of the brand of blind and inappropriate militarism represented by the unilateral U.S. deployment in Somalia.

The diplomatic attempt to reconstruct Somalia governance ran into problems when it failed to take into account and to accommodate the traditional social and political forces that have defined the Somali culture for thousands of years. The complexities of Somali national reconciliation and reconstruction proved difficult in part because of the powerful legacy of recent history — a history which saw the United States and the Soviet Union use Somalia, Ethiopia and other countries in the south as convenient pawns in the superpower struggle. The end of the cold war, however, saw convenience turn into expedience and finally saw Somalia transformed from a former strategic asset into a disposable liability.

The post-cold war collapse of the Siad Barre regime, combined with the extravagant and lingering militarisation of the Somali political culture by the two superpowers, generated the reality that has plagued Somalia in the last few years: on the one hand, a deep resentment of the legacy of foreign manipulation of Somalia for narrow, foreign strategic aims rather than for the benefit of Somali humanity, and, on the other hand, a collapsed domestic system of political governance whose void was filled by clan leaders armed to the teeth

with armaments willingly provided in recent decades by foreign powers.

Had the U.S.-led U.N. humanitarian operation stuck firmly to its mandate to assure the delivery of food supplies while leaving the Somalis to decide on political reconstruction on their own, we would not have witnessed the problems of the last two months; and we would see the United Nations live up to the promise of its founders half a century ago. The Americans, however, succumbed to two of their most fierce and retributive character flaws: the bravado of blind militarism and the intellectual delinquency of their intervention in what they perceived to be exotic and chaotic cultures. When these two attributes led to the loss of American lives and the instigation of anti-U.S. sentiments among a growing number of Somalis, the United States responded with an even more inappropriate policy: a flawed moral penchant for emotional vengeance as the antidote to the misguided and disproportionate use of U.S. forces in the service of imprecise political goals. More Somalis would have to die in order for more Americans to feel good about themselves.



What started as a noble humanitarian mission collapsed in the debris of a brand of ignoble militaristic revenge practised by both Americans and Somalis. On both sides, the humanism of otherwise proud and sensitive cultures gave way under the pressures of post-cold war national readjustments and finally shattered under the irresistible force of the respective American and Somali nightmares of national humiliation and shame.

In both cases, these nightmares did not spring out of a vacuum. Both were firmly rooted in the global geopolitical excesses of the 1960s and 1970s, in the Horn of Africa and Southeast Asia alike. Americans and Somalis shooting each other in 1993 were not only taking aim to kill an immediate threat; they were also slaying ancient ghosts that lurked in the national psyche, and exercising horrors that still haunted them from decades past. The spectacle has been mutually demeaning: good people on both sides using bad means to avenge primordial national failures; decent human beings turning to their guns today to set right the degradation that their guns inflicted on their personal psyches and their national honour in the past. It was and is a tragic battle that neither side can win if they both insist on resorting to the lunacy of militarism instead of finding solace and then success through patient diplomacy based on mutual cultural respect and political realism.

The particularities of the collective madness in Somalia are bad enough in themselves, but they are more troublesome for what they suggest about a repetition of the madness in other places. The failure of the Ethiopia talks and the advent of Somali-American warfare have generated a dilemma that is neither unique nor unexpected in the post-cold war world: what to do about unstable, post-colonial, 20th century

countries that sit uncomfortably within whimsical frontiers forged from the debris of 19th and 20th century European and Russian/Soviet colonialism? Somalia was the most gruesome example of this increasingly visible brand of frail statehood, but not the only one. Similar, if less severe examples, have faced the world in places such as Lebanon, Iraq (Kurdistan), Western Sahara, Kuwait, Chad, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Yugoslavia, Georgia, Tajikistan, Sudan, Afghanistan and Angola, to mention only the most obvious.

The expropriation of the U.N.'s moral and diplomatic mandate by the U.S. State and Defence Departments is further aggravated by two related failures: the acquiescence of European and other world powers in American hegemony and the sad inability of the southern states to respond to the crisis in Somalia and other fractured lands. This raises the potentially catastrophic spectre of Somalia not as an isolated historical aberration or an eccentricity of the current global order, but rather as a macabre signpost along the road to a new world order conceived and implemented by an American psyche that is at once perturbed, jumpy and trigger-happy.

Once again, Somalia may not be novel in this respect; it may be only the latest in a series of cases where the United States substitutes military prowess for diplomatic rationality and where the impressive firepower of the United States' long-range smart bombs cannot camouflage the sad triumph of its stupid and short-sighted policy-making. Somalia may be merely a signpost along the road of unchallenged American militarism that has already passed through Lebanon, Panama, Granada and Iraq.

That is the bad news. Fortunately, it is possible also to discern signs of good news, in four forms: a) many Americans who recognise their mistakes in Somalia and would like to avoid them in the future, b) Europeans, Japanese, Chinese and other world quasi-powers who recognise and have criticised the dangers of such unilateral American militarism, c) United Nations officials who appreciate and would like to redress the long-term damage being done to their organisation, and d) Third World countries that are both ashamed and frightened by their wretched inability to do anything other than tune in to CNN to watch the blaze of American guns and absorb the fury of American policy statements.

President Clinton is in a difficult position, having inherited the Somalia intervention from a shattered, discredited and humiliated George Bush who tried in vain to salvage his manhood by standing on the turret of his tanks, instead of standing on the shoulders of the common sense and humanism of his people. Mr. Clinton may have recognised the limits of American militarism; he has declared that U.S. troops will leave Somalia in six months and appears to recognise that Somali political reconciliation will have to accommodate all local actors, including General Aided.

This is a constructive and realistic American attitude; it is a shame that it required the deaths of scores of Americans, Pakistanis, Somalis and others to be activated. We shall soon find out whether the United States government has really laid to rest the ghost of its agony in Vietnam and accepts finally that American militarism cannot provide an answer to the problems of nation-building, governance, stability and human dignity throughout the troubled lands of the south.

Mr. Clinton may be showing important signs of political and idealistic realism and a fresh American capacity to deal with Third World cultures in a more intelligent and mutually respectful manner. If so, he should be encouraged to continue walking down this road, with the hope that his actions — if they fulfill the promise they now hint at — will also mark a significant turn for the better among the lurid debris and body parts stemming from the militarism, racism, barbarism and provincialism that have heretofore marked the path of the made-in-USA new world order.

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Dichotomy of a process that can be made or broke

By Ziad Asali

ON MONDAYS, the flood gates usually open at my clinic in my small town in Illinois, and patients pour in, having saved their ailments over the weekend. But on Monday, Sept. 13, I was standing in line waiting to get into the South Lawn of the White House. Once in, I started wandering about in the bright sunlight, watching the high and mighty, whose faces are recognised the world over, taking their seats and chatting amiably.

The drama, the historic and real-life drama unfolded on centre stage. All eyes were transfixed upon Yasser Arafat extending his hand to Yitzhak Rabin as the all-encompassing arms of Bill Clinton nudged them both closer. The knowledge that history was being made superseded the surge of emotions palpable in my chest. This I will remember forever. Here we were at last, at the end of a long journey and at the beginning of another. The short, stubble-bearded, unattractive man in military garb, this man with the symbolic headdress, much ridiculed, despised or admired, stood proudly with an extended hand of peace to claim a Palestinian homeland. Mr. Rabin, the embodiment of the ruthless opponent, the general and statesman, having said enough to bloodshed and tears, shook the extended hand in peace.

This is the stuff of poetry and drama that has changed the variables of the historical equation of the Middle East. It is now up to practical men and women with the usual mix of vision and greed, of sacrifice and ruthlessness, and some plain common sense to translate the promise of this moment to peace and prosperity or to disillusionment and chaos.

The die is cast. The old division of Arab and Jew, Palestinian and Israeli, does not hold firmly anymore. The new divide is between those who support this agreement and those who don't. This means that Arabs, Muslims, Jews and Palestinians of whatever nationalities will be in the same camp while others like them will be in the opposing camp. It is clear that reason-

able men and women with the best of intentions may have their reservations about this agreement: the way it was negotiated, the exclusion of other Arab partners, the deferment of the explosive issues of Jerusalem, the refugees and the settlements, the degree of commitment of the Israeli government to the spirit of the agreement, as well as the legitimate concern about accountability and democracy in the budding Palestinian administration. These issues need to be raised now and henceforth, loudly and clearly. We ask the friends of democracy and advocates of human rights to help guarantee these principles in the new Palestine. However, opposition to this agreement means standing in the same trenches with the Shamirs, Sharons, and Netanyahu and with the antiquated religious fanatics on both sides whose absolutist vision cannot be reconciled with reality.

The significance of the opposition to the agreement and its potential for undermining the whole process is not lost on the White House. This was evident when Arab and Jewish American leaders were invited to a briefing at the Executive Building that same Monday afternoon. The group was given an hour or so to visit, get acquainted, and tentatively explore the new relationship.

Vice President Al Gore made the introductory remarks, stressing the exceptional historical significance of the day he called "an event you will be talking to your grandchildren about." He stressed the commitment of the administration to the agreement and reiterated, as usual, the American commitment to the security of Israel. Then he introduced Mr. Warren Christopher, giving him more credit for the agreement than he had received in the press thus far. When Mr. Christopher modestly demurred and thanked Mr. Gore for his generous remarks, Mr. Gore swiftly replied "thank you for making me vice president." Mr. Christopher stressed the historical significance of the agreement, praised the leadership on both sides and confirmed the commitment of the United States to its imple-

mentation. He commented on the role of the U.S. administration in creating the conditions that made it possible, and mentioned that he was briefed about the progress of the negotiations especially during his visit to the Middle East in July in the aftermath of the Israeli attack on Lebanon. He stated that he was pleasantly surprised at the degree of progress achieved even at that time. He invited the audience to ask questions or make comments. I think that the salient points which came out of that exchange can be summarised as follows:

1. The U.S. government will lend its full support to this agreement and its implementation.

2. Upgrading the Palestinian-American dialogue and relationship will depend on progress achieved in implementation of this agreement.

3. The U.S. government will make a financial contribution. More importantly, it will convene an international conference to raise funds for this project. Christopher cautioned against the use of exaggerated figures (\$10 billion or so) for fear of disillusionment.

4. Mr. Christopher also avoided prejudging any of the substantive issues deferred in the agreement such as Jerusalem, the status of the refugees and the settlements.

5. He underscored the need for a comprehensive solution on all fronts but avoided setting time-tables. He stressed the continued contact of the U.S. with Syria and Lebanon and announced the agreement that was signed between Jordan and Israel the next day.

6. He raised the question of the boycott and stressed the need for Arab governments to put an end to the boycott as soon as possible.

7. He stressed the need for immediate, tangible results to come of the agreement in order to lend momentum to the peace process and warned of the possibility of increased terrorist activity in the short run "as a last hurrah for the terrorists." He also mentioned in this context that the question of lifting the travel ban to Lebanon is constantly under review, warning again of the potential for kidnapping, a fac-

tor which must be considered before the ban is lifted.

Lastly, he expressed appreciation for the spirit of optimism and cooperation shown by several members of the audience of Arab and Jewish Americans convened under the same roof for the first time, under the auspices of the highest level of an American administration.

Vice President Gore took the podium again and, stressing the unique expertise of members of the audience, he solicited advice and recommendations in the form of specific projects and ideas to assist in implementing this agreement.

"The die is cast. The old division of Arab and Jew, Palestinian and Israeli, does not hold firmly anymore. The new divide is between those who support this agreement and those who don't."

President Clinton was announced shortly thereafter and he stressed again his commitment as well as the administration's commitment to the agreement. He urged members of the audience to convey this commitment to people in the Middle East and to assure them that he intended to see it through. Furthermore, he urged members of the audience to extend their support to the leadership that courageously worked out the agreement under the pressure of obviously high risk.

The president asked everyone to contact their senators and congresspeople to ask that they back it up with financial support, keeping in mind the budget constraints in these times. Lastly, the president reiterated Mr. Gore's request for specific recommendations on projects to be implemented on the ground.

After the official briefing, the president and vice president mingled with the crowd and listened to further suggestions. Eventually, I was able to

express to both of them individually, as well as to Anthony Lake, the national security adviser, the urgent need for an agreement with Syria. All three men expressed their understanding of the crucial nature of such an agreement. The president added that it was a question of timing. When I replied that the agreement had to be reached right away, he suggested that this might present a problem for Mr. Rabin with his constituency, "but we are all working on it."

I would like to add here that I had a chance to talk to Mr. Lake and to Mr. Stephanopoulos, senior adviser to the president, about the need to put an end to the demonisation and dehumanisation of Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims in this country. Both men separately reassured me that this is being done and that more positive things will be coming across the media on this issue.

Since this point is so central to those of us who are interested in a friendly relationship between the Arab Islamic World and the West, I would like to take this opportunity to tell you that I had the occasion, as a member of the Arab American Council of Presidents, to raise this issue with Secretary Christopher on Aug. 10 at the State Department. He assured me at that time that he would be speaking out on the necessity to differentiate between Muslims in general and those who commit terrorist acts in the name of Islam, stating categorically that "we have no problem with Islam." It might be of interest to you to note that this meeting took place after the secretary's return from the Middle East. At that time he told us that he supported Mr. Rabin's ideas on early empowerment of the Palestinians and regretted the fact that the Palestinians had not taken Mr. Rabin up on those ideas. Clearly, Secretary Christopher knew more at the time than he was saying.

Mr. Christopher maintains that this agreement was possible in part because of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which sponsored radical Arab causes, and the development of new realities in the regional balance of power, a consequence of Gulf war. To these we

may also add the intifada, the ascendance of Mr. Rabin and the Labour Party to power in Israel on the platform of land for peace, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, the political and economic deterioration of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), as well as the diminishing prospects for future foreign aid to Israel. One might conjecture that the Clinton administration's perceived pro-Zionist policies made the often-stated position of successive American administrations that they would not apply pressure on Israel to come to terms with its neighbours seem particularly plausible. The combination of all these factors convinced the PLO and Israel that peace was possible only if each had an interlocutor in the other.

For the Palestinians, this agreement is the culmination of the realisation of their historical loss. Instead of half a loaf they ended up with two morsels and a promise of the possibility of the half. Those who support it embrace Mr. Peres' vision of parity and prosperity, hoping that good will coupled with hard work will prevail. In doing so, they risk being labelled by their opponents as naive at best and sellouts at worst. Those who do not support it cling to historical animosities and see nothing but hegemony and disgrace. They reject this singular opportunity yet offer up no alternative to the status quo. They are accused by their opponents of buying their heads in the ideological sand.

In conclusion, we have on hand an agreement that provides the Palestinians a homeland with the potential for a Palestinian state. It lays to rest the dream of Greater Israel. The agreement has within it both the capacity for hegemony and domination that could spell its demise and the promise of parity and prosperity that could bring forth peace. It is up to men and women of vision and forethought to see to it that peace prevails.

The writer, M. D. is the vice president of the Arab American University Graduates. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Jerusalem — rent apart, having a place for everyone

By Pascal B. Karmy

Israeli leaders constantly declare that Jerusalem should remain unified and the eternal capital of Israel. This of course will not be accepted neither by Palestinians nor by Jordanians or other Arabs and Muslims, as none of them will relinquish their historical, political and religious rights in the Holy City. It is therefore inevitable that at least East Jerusalem and its suburbs must be established as the capital of the future Palestine state.

Jewish leaders in general and Israelis in particular are wont to make the world believe that Jerusalem was Jewish all along its history. This is controverted by historical facts as will be shown in this article. It is not the intention here to delve into a detailed ancient history of Jerusalem, but rather to have a brief survey to show that Jerusalem, especially its eastern part, is Arab and Muslim from a historical and religious point of view and it is presently Palestinian territory under customary and conventional international law, including of course pertinent United Nations resolutions. It cannot, however, be denied that the Jewish people has had deep religious and historical connections with the city. Nor can it be disputed that Christianity has certainly wider and deeper religious association than Judaism with Jerusalem. It is the birthplace of Christianity, which has much more sacred shrines and sanctuaries than Judaism, among which the Holy Sepulchre, the Via Dolorosa, Gethsemane and many other churches which date back to the earliest birth of Christianity, in the first century A.D.

Jerusalem was not built by the Jews but by the Jebusites, a branch of the Canaanite tribes, the original inhabitants of Palestine which was then known even in the Jewish Bible by the name of the "Land of Canaan." Jerusalem's original Jebusite name was Ursalem and in the course of history its name became Ushalem after its conquest

from the Jebusites by King David. Its name was changed into "Aelia Capitolina" by Roman Emperor Hadrian when he crushed the Jewish revolt in the year 132 A.D. and expelled the remaining Jews from the city. As from that date, the Jews as a people ceased to exist in Palestine. It was by its last name, Aelia Capitolina, that Jerusalem was known when the Muslim Arabs conquered it in the year 638 A.D. under the Caliph Omar Ibn Al Khattab. He was received by the Christian Patriarch Sophronius in Aelia Capitolina near the Holy Sepulchre. Caliph Omar called it in Arabic "Ila" a transliteration of the word Aelia.

"Jerusalem was not built by the Jews but by the Jebusites, a branch of the Canaanite tribes, the original inhabitants of Palestine which was then known even in the Jewish Bible by the name of the 'Land of Canaan'."

riarch Sophronius in Aelia Capitolina near the Holy Sepulchre. Caliph Omar called it in Arabic "Ila" a transliteration of the word Aelia.

Jerusalem, later called by the Arabs and Muslims Bayt Al Maqdis (the abode of sanctity) or more simply Al Quds, is holy for the three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Its importance for Islam arises from the fact that it was the first Qibla of Islam — that is the direction towards which Muslims turn to perform the ritual prayer. At the very beginning of Islam, Muslims turned their prayer towards Al Quds until a Koranic revelation (Second Surah, Verse 144) received by Prophet Mohammad, commanded them to face the inviolable Place of Worship (that

is Ka'ba of Mecca). Al Quds is also the site of the third holy place for Islam, namely Al Aqsa Mosque after those of Mecca and Medina.

Moreover, Al Quds is the site of the nocturnal journey of Prophet Mohammad to heaven. According to the Koranic revelation, the Prophet was transported by night from Mecca to Haram Al Aqsa by the celestial steed called the Buraq and from there he ascended to the heavens as revealed in Al Isra' Surah XVII, Verse 1 which reads as follows:

"Glorified be He Who carried His servant by night from the inviolable Place of Worship to the Far Distant Place of Worship, the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, that We might show him of Our Tokens! LO! He, only He, is the Hearer, the Seer."

Jerusalem's importance to and association with the Arabs and Islam has survived through the ages notwithstanding the vicissitudes which it has undergone. With the exception of the short Crusade period in 1099 A.D., Palestine, including Jerusalem, remained either under Arab or Muslim control as from the Arab conquest in 638 A.D. until the termination of the Ottoman Rule in 1917 by the victory of the Allies in World War I and the subsequent imposition of the British Mandate over Palestine.

It should be observed that the conquest of Palestine by the ancient Hebrews and the subsequent establishment of the Jewish Kingdom by King David was episodic, similar to other episodes of ancient conquests achieved by other invaders, such as the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Greeks

and the Romans. The Kingdom of David and Solomon did not last more than one hundred years. The fact that Jerusalem was for a short span of time, not more than one hundred years, the seat of the Kingdom of David and Solomon does not bestow upon the present Israelis (majority of whom are not the descendants of the ancient Hebrews) the right to claim all Jerusalem, including the eastern part of it, after the lapse of more than two thousand years, that is since the Babylonian captivity of the Jews in the year 587 B.C.

Even before the advent of Islam to Palestine, in 638 A.D., the Palestinians were the original inhabitants of Palestine as they are the descendants of the Canaanites, the Arameans, the Jebusites and the Philistines (from whom the

name Palestine was derived). Some of them became Christians and others Muslims. In their book "The Palestine State," (1977 edition), the authors Richard Ward, Don Peretz and Evan Wilson state the following: "The indigenous inhabitants of Palestine, whom we began to call the Palestine Arabs in the post-World War I period, are the descendants of all the various peoples who have occupied the country, beginning with the Canaanites and other Old Testament tribes and running through the Greeks, Romans, Muslim Arabs, Crusaders from Western Europe, Turks and certain Jews." And on page 61, the authors add: "It is also incorrect to regard the Palestine Arabs as having entered Palestine for the first time during the Muslim Arab conquest in the seventh century. The in-

vading Arab forces was relatively small in number but it seems clear that gradually, over the next few centuries, most of the local inhabitants were converted to Islam, mass conversions of populations being not uncommon in these times. The Arabs of Palestine claim, therefore, with some historical justification, that they are the descendants of the original inhabitants of Palestine and of the city of Jerusalem."

Under the United Nations Resolution 181 on the partition of Palestine, Jerusalem was to be constituted a *corpus separatum* which however did not materialise. The West Bank, including East Jerusalem, was occupied by Israel in 1967 and was therefore considered an occupied territory. Several United Nations General Assembly and Security Council re-

solutions condemned the annexation of East Jerusalem by Israel and provided that any change in its status and any measure taken in this regard are null and void. United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 are equally applicable to East Jerusalem and its suburbs, and Israel must withdraw from there.

It can therefore be concluded that the claim of the Palestinians to Jerusalem is historically, religiously, politically preponderant over the

"The fact that Jerusalem was for a short span of time, not more than one hundred years, the seat of the Kingdom of David and Solomon does not bestow upon the present Israelis (majority of whom are not the descendants of the ancient Hebrews) the right to claim all Jerusalem after the lapse of more than two thousand years."



Panoramic view of Jerusalem, with the Dome of the Rock in the foreground (file photo)

claim of the Israelis. Nevertheless, I believe a sort of a *modus vivendi* could be worked out between the Palestinians and Israel whereby West Jerusalem and East Jerusalem could be respectively the capital of Israel and the future Palestine state without necessarily dividing it. However, Jordan's legitimate interest in the Holy City must be taken into consideration and as Crown Prince Hassan stated in his address to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations: "The legitimate rights which the three great monotheistic faiths share in the Holy City must be guaranteed, and claims of political and administrative sovereignty accommodated to the satisfaction of all."

S. African reserve pioneers unique programme to save black rhinos

By Clyde Russell
Agence France Presse

PILANESBERG. South Africa — The black rhinos of the Piliangberg game reserve have gone hi-tech, sporting a brace of microchip transponders as part of a pioneering programme to save the highly endangered species.

The park's 38 black rhinos are being darted and implanted with the chips in the most extensive monitoring project yet undertaken to conserve the black rhino, whose numbers in Africa have shrunk from tens of thousands at the turn of the century to less than 2,500.

Danish biologists Hanne Lindemann and Hans Bjarne Hansen proudly claim that Piliangberg's black rhino are the best managed population in Africa.

The two have been coming to this reserve in South Africa's nominally independent Bophuthatswana for two months every year since 1989 to help run the project.

The microchip enables researchers to identify each animal in case it is killed or poached, Ms. Hansen said.

"If a rhino is poached and if (its horn) pitches up in Hong Kong, the transponder can be

read," Ms. Hansen said. "It helps with court cases."

None of Piliangberg's herd of black rhino — 20 of which now carry transponders — have been killed so far, but other reserves in South Africa are starting to feel the effects of poachers moving south after virtually wiping out the rest of Africa's black rhinos.

Zimbabwe has lost 1,150 black rhinos in the past two years, reducing what was once the largest population in Africa to just 350, significantly less than South Africa's present stock of 800.

The rhinos, which can weigh more than one tonne, are darted from a helicopter before the transponders are implanted.

One of the chips is drilled into the horn and sealed with glue, the other is sewn into the flesh behind the shoulder.

The one-centimetre microchips are only part of Piliangberg's extensive monitoring project.

The rhinos also have their ears clipped in different patterns to make identification easier and Ms. Hansen and Ms. Lindemann have comprehensive files and photographs of each animal.

The two spend hours tracking and observing the rhinos on

foot in the 300 square kilometre reserve.

It is a dangerous job, considering how aggressive Africa's second largest mammal — after the elephant — can get when it feels threatened.

Ideally, Ms. Hansen said, the Piliangberg project should be extended to all game reserves in Namibia and South Africa — but the problem is a lack of funds.

Ms. Adcock, Piliangberg's resident ecologist, said sufficient money could be raised from hunting out old rhinos.

But animal preservationists in the northern hemisphere — whom she described as "bunny-huggers" — have blackballed the idea and lobbied their governments to prevent imports of black rhino trophies.

The more common and less threatened white rhinos are hunted at an average cost of about \$25,000 each.

But most big game hunters really want a black rhino, and Ms. Adcock said a hunt of could fetch up to \$250,000.

There is little physical difference between white and black rhinos, the only real distinction being the two grey-coloured animals is the lip, which is wider on whites

In fact, said John Hiley of the Rhino and Elephant Foundation, the term "white" is a bastardisation of the Dutch word for "wide" — describing the snout of the sub-species that is more common in South Africa.

The main difference is in their feeding habits and behaviour, the whites being grazers and travelling in family groups, while the more aggressive blacks are loners and browsers, he said.

Piliangberg has lost three ageing black rhinos to natural causes in recent years and Ms. Adcock said if the animals had been hunted to extend the monitoring programme.

"They could pay for themselves," Ms. Adcock said. The threat of increased poaching could become reality before all the remaining black rhinos are sufficiently protected, she said.

Ms. Adcock said Piliangberg was "gearing itself for the big onslaught" against its rhino population, which in addition to the 38 blacks, includes some 200 whites.

"In two to three years, we will be in the same situation as other African countries," Ms. Adcock said, warning that overseas donors had a tendency to act after it was already too late.

See Naples and bring your own water, milk, government

By Frances D'Emilio
The Associated Press

NAPLES, Italy — One look at Naples today would probably kill the long-ago Neapolitan who said with such pride in its beauty: "See Naples and then die."

Garbage is piled in alleys, and street robberies are common. The water often runs discoloured — it may or may not be unhealthy — and most traffic lights don't work.

This southern metropolis once renowned for breathtaking vistas of hills and sea is known now for shortages, breakdowns and general chaos.

Many bits of official business have been neglected because many city council members played hooky and meeting after meeting failed to gain a quorum.

Citing concerns for public order, Italy's interior minister dissolved the truant council Aug. 6 — the mayor had already quit. Then he sent a squad of commissioners to try to guarantee a minimum of city services for 1.2 million Neapolitans until local elections for a new mayor and council in November.

Although Rome has disbanded scores of city councils in the south because of ties to underworld gangs, Naples was

the first to be dissolved for public disorder.

The city's problems have become so dire the newsweekly Panorama wondered whether Premier Carlo Ciampi was acting on pure faith when he picked Naples to host a summit of leading industrial nations next July. Neapolitans do this twice a year when they fervently pray for the blood of San Gennaro to liquefy and bring the city good luck.

They could use some luck. In a city with chronic shortages of water during the warm months, a brown liquid began gushing from faucets and fountains this summer. Officials first issued a health warning, then said manganese was staining the water and wasn't harmful. Then they advised against drinking water that looked too dark.

"What should a blind housewife do?" the Rome newspaper *Il Messaggero* asked.

On top of that came a false alarm that the city dairy plant was producing contaminated milk.

Nearly every traffic signal in Naples has broken down since a maintenance contract ran out. (This might be the least of Naples' problems, since so few Neapolitans stop for red lights.)

Disaster almost always seems about to descend on this city in

the shadow of Vesuvius.

Unemployment is the highest in Italy — 27 per cent of the work force, compared with seven per cent in wealthy northern Italy and 21 per cent overall in the less-developed south.

Some jobs don't get counted, of course. The Camorra, the Neapolitan underworld, is one of the city's biggest employers, recruiting youngsters for numbers-running, drug-pushing, extortion and sometimes murder.

Hotels warn out-of-towners, about neighbourhoods where street urchins known as "scugnizzi" zip along on motorbikes and rip off necklaces, cameras and handbags. Even some Neapolitans have taken to wearing "fanny" packs around their waist to thwart pickpockets.

Reality has made a mockery of the once-proud Neapolitan saying: "Vedi Napoli e poi muori." — see Naples and then die. The idea was that you might as well go to your reward after taking in the city's medieval castles and Rococo palaces and the stunning views from hillside neighbourhoods of a blue bay flecked with orange, yellow and green fishing boats.

Naples is living "a difficult moment which needs one-party rule to help it resolve its problems," says Aldo Marino, sent in by the Interior Ministry to run the city until elections. Mr. Marino, who represents no party, means that after years of bickering coalition governments, Naples needs a solid sense of direction.

Some have gone so far as to suggest Naples needs an iron hand.



One of Piliangberg's black rhinos being darted and fitted with microchip transponders (AFP photo)

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Eurotunnel aims to open on March 7

LONDON (R) — The channel tunnel link between Britain and France will open next March but train passengers in London, Paris and Brussels have to wait until June, more than a year later than planned, operator Eurotunnel PLC said Monday.

Europe's biggest infrastructure project will now cost £10 billion (\$15.24 billion) by 1998, almost double the amount budgeted in 1987 when work started after Eurotunnel won a 35-year concession from France and Britain.

That means the company will have to seek another £1 billion (\$1.52 billion) in funds, of which half will be in new shares, before June 1994 when its current resources run out.

Much of the delay is due to a long-running cost dispute with building consortium Trans-

manche Link which groups five British and five French construction firms. But the parties are working toward a settlement which is expected to be reached in 1995.

The freight service will start up on March 7, 1994 through the 31-mile 50-kilometre tunnel between Folkestone and Sangatte.

The shuttle wagons on which passengers will drive their cars at either end of the tunnel for a 35-minute journey will begin around the May 6 formal opening by Queen Elizabeth and President Francois Mitterrand.

From the end of June, Eurostar passenger trains should run between London, Paris and Brussels for the first time ever.

Chairman and chief executive Sir Alastair Morton rejected fears the tunnel would

be a prime target for terrorist attacks, especially now the Irish Republican Army has stepped up its bombing campaign on mainland Britain.

"People must forget the idea that terrorists can somehow blow up the tunnel, it is massively strong. It is built to withstand a major earthquake," he said in an interview.

Eurotunnel will announce the prices for its Le Shuttle tourist service and freight service in January.

Sir Morton said the prices would be higher than ferry tickets to avoid a price war.

"What good would it do to drive them off the market? We would become a regulated monopoly. There are people who will use the ferries. There will be people who use the tunnel," he said.

But recent ferry price cuts and the opening delays forced Eurotunnel to cut its revenue forecasts again.

It now expects 1994 revenues of £224.1 million (\$341.4 million), £44 million (\$67.0 million) lower than it expected in April and less than half what it expected in October last year.

It 1995 revenue forecast fell by £22 million (\$34.1 million) to £554.0 million (\$844.1 million) and that for 1996 by £18 million (\$27.4 million) to £690.7 million (\$1.05 billion).

"The point is that it's a strong market we're going to. The overcapacity that exists on the ferries today will disappear in the second half of next year when the ferry services unify," Sir Morton said, predicting rival ferry companies P.O. European ferries and Stena Sealink will pool ferry services.

Banks want greater debt guarantees from Russia

MOSCOW (R) — Western bank creditors are seeking greater guarantees from Russia on foreign debt repayments before concluding a rescheduling deal, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Shokhin said Monday.

"Russia is seeking equal treatment for all creditors," he told a news conference after talks in Frankfurt last week with commercial bank representatives.

Mr. Shokhin explained that the problem centred around the issue of sovereign immunity, with banks demanding that Russia give this up before reaching a deal.

It did it would have to offer assets including natural resources and property if it defaulted on debt repayments.

"We will not accept the abandonment of sovereign immunity," Mr. Shokhin said.

He said Russia was due to pay \$500 million to the so-called London Club of bank creditors this year but it remained to be decided exactly how much had to be paid to each of the club's 600 banks. Nevertheless he believed a deal could be reached within weeks.

Omani firms to pay corporate tax in 1994

DUBAI (R) — The Gulf oil-producing state of Oman will impose corporate taxes on Omani-owned companies starting next year, Trade and Industry Minister Maktoub Bin Ali Bin Sultan was quoted Monday as saying.

Companies will be charged between 5.0 and 7.5 per cent corporate tax depending on the size of the firm and its net profits, the UAE newspaper Al Khaleej quoted Mr. Sultan as saying.

Mr. Sultan said wholly-owned Omani firms had been exempted from taxes in the past to encourage investment in the local economy. The exemption was extended due to the economic downturn caused by the Gulf crisis and a lack of locally trained auditors.

Mr. Sultan said this was no longer the case and "affirmed the government's intention to implement the law on corporate tax to take effect in 1994 and be collected in 1995," the paper said.

A tax of 5.0 per cent would be charged on all net profits above 30,000 riyals (\$78,000), rising to 7.5 per cent for profits above 200,000 riyals (\$519,000).

Companies with a paid-up capital of less than 10,000 Omani riyals (\$26,000) would remain exempt, Mr. Sultan said.

He said the taxes were needed to help the government "provide necessary services to Omani nationals," and would not have an adverse effect on business in the Sultanate.

Mr. Sultan said Oman, a modest oil producer which pumps around 800,000 barrels per day of crude, had set a limit of 10 per cent for its budget deficit in the five year plan which ends next year.

Egypt's SUMED aims to corner oil storage market

CAIRO (R) — The Egypt-based SUMED oil pipeline has launched an ambitious plan to corner the commercial oil storage market in the Mediterranean by nearly tripling storage capacity as a first stage, SUMED's chairman said Sunday.

Mr. Nazih said he expected strong demand for the extra storage because SUMED commissioned a feasibility study by the U.S. firm Bechtel and consultants clients before making the decision.

The study showed oil storage in southern Europe was about 22 million barrels compared to 73 million barrels in northern Europe, although consumption in both areas was much the same.

Mr. Nazih said pumping boosters installed by next April would raise pumping capacity to between 100 million and 120 million tonnes a year depending on how they tested.

Italy privatisation claims first cabinet victim

ROME (R) — Italy's tortuous privatisation process claimed its first cabinet victim Sunday when industry minister Paolo Savona resigned after being overruled in a public row over how to sell off state assets.

A ministry statement noted that Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi had sided with Mr. Savona's opponent in the dispute and said the industry minister had quit to ensure the government's unity.

The resignation of Mr. Savona, a respected technocrat, comes at an awkward moment for Mr. Ciampi who is committed to privatising a major Italian bank by the end of the year and who faces a difficult

parliamentary passage for his unpopular 1994 budget.

Mr. Savona had emerged badly bruised from a head-on clash on Saturday with Romano Prodi, powerful chairman of IRI (Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale), the huge state holding that is Italy's single largest company.

In the dispute, Mr. Savona openly favoured handing such jewels in IRI's crown as its banks to a select group of investors while Mr. Prodi championed the idea of a public company to spread the ownership among as many small shareholders as possible.

Mr. Ciampi Saturday expressed the government's full

confidence in Mr. Prodi after Mr. Savona had launched a savage public attack on the IRI chairman, blaming him for the delay in privatising its two banks, Banca Commerciale Italiana and Credito Italiano.

Mr. Savona fired the first shot Saturday, issuing a statement that criticised Mr. Prodi for speaking out on how state companies should be privatised and advising him to spend more time on sorting out IRI's grave problems.

A furious Prodi apparently threatened to resign and Mr. Ciampi quickly issued a statement saying his industry minister did not mean to censure Mr. Prodi. The premier fol-

lowed this up with a second statement openly backing the IRI chairman.

The real issue in this war of words is how will Banca Commerciale Italiana be sold off sometime in 1994. Mr. Prodi has already said the other IRI bank, Credito Italiano, would be floated as a public company by the end of this year.

Enrico Cuccia, the all-powerful mentor of the Italian merchant bank Mediobanca, has long had his eye on the prestigious Banca Commerciale and wants some of the greatest names in Italian private industry and finance to get control.

Kim to focus on S. Korea economic slump

SEOUL (AFP) — President Kim Young-Sam, after focusing on his anti-corruption reforms during most of his term, said he would now give top priority to redressing South Korea's economic slump.

At a meeting with his cabinet ministers charged with economic affairs last week, Mr. Kim admitted that he had been too engrossed in pushing for reforms since taking office in January to work on his new economy programmes.

"But from now on I will put all my energy to reviving our national economy," Mr. Kim was quoted by his spokesman as saying after ordering his economic ministers to map out a plan by early November to boost the nation's exports.

Since taking office as the first civilian president in three decades, Mr. Kim has launched a sweeping probe of corrupt officials and ordered a ban on the traditional use of aliases in financial transactions to wipe out tax evasion and bribery.

He was speaking after receiving an official report from the state think-tank Korea Development Institute (KDI), forecasting economic growth at 4.5 per cent this year, far less than the government target of

six per cent.

The central Bank of Korea (BOK) was even more pessimistic, forecasting 4.0 per cent growth for this year.

By all accounts, officials agree this year's growth will be lower than the 4.7 per cent rate registered last year under the outgoing government of president Roh Tae-Woo. That will make it the lowest in 13 years, analysts point out.

The KDI report said the economic slow-down was largely due to the adverse effects of enforcement of the "real name system" banning the use of aliases in all financial transactions and a bad rice harvest caused by this year's unusually cool summer.

However, the KDI report forecast growth at 6.5 to 7.2 per cent next year, since investment in facilities and equipment will increase by up to 4.5 per cent in 1993, in contrast to a 2.4 per cent decline this year.

"Clearly, the economic performance was bad this year, but it will definitely be much better next year," said a senior official at the Economic Planning Board, the government's economic policy-making ministry.

KDI forecast a current

account surplus of \$2.1 to \$2.2 billion in 1994, as against this year's expected deficit of \$100 million. But private economic research institutes argued the favourable balance of payments forecast for next year was too optimistic.

According to Samsung Economic Research Institute Director Lim Dong-Sung, the country was suffering from stagflation since consumer prices are forecast to rise by 5.3 to 5.8 per cent this year despite the economic downturn.

Last year, inflation was pegged at 4.7 per cent.

Korea University Economics Professor Lee Pil-Sang said the culprit for the stagflation was Mr. Kim's August decree implementing the real name system which obliged the central bank to release vast sums of money to compensate for a cash crunch.

Meanwhile, South Korea's business conglomerates are so heavily indebted that interest payments leave them only with water-thin profits, a report by the BOK has showed.

The debt ratio by 73 major subsidiaries of the 30 largest conglomerates is 433 per cent, the Board of Audit and Inspection of the BOK said in the

report submitted to the National Assembly.

This means that the 73 subsidiaries were saddled with debts 4.33 times bigger than their equity capital, it said.

It compared with debt ratio of 147.3 per cent in the United States, 221.0 per cent in Japan and 97.9 per cent in Taiwan.

The debt ratio of South Korea's top automaker, Hyundai Motors, was 463.5 per cent, and that of Samsung Electronics, the country's largest semiconductor and electronics manufacturer, was 439.7 per cent.

Interest payment for the heavy debts left the 30 conglomerates with slim profits. Their returns on a total turnover of \$210 billion was only \$1.05 billion, or 0.5 per cent, last year.

They also borrowed heavily from banks, accounting for 17 per cent of all bank loans. Samsung topped the list, using a total of \$5.4 billion of bank loans, followed by Hyundai with \$3.7 billion.

Hanjin, which owns Korean Air, came third with \$3.3 billion, Lucky Goldstar ranked fourth with \$3.2 billion and Daewoo fifth with \$3.1 billion.

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



"Your morning breath is really bad today, so I put toothpaste on your eggs instead of ketchup."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

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REVUC

SNUFUG

BASURD

THIS CALLS FOR THE ARMY!

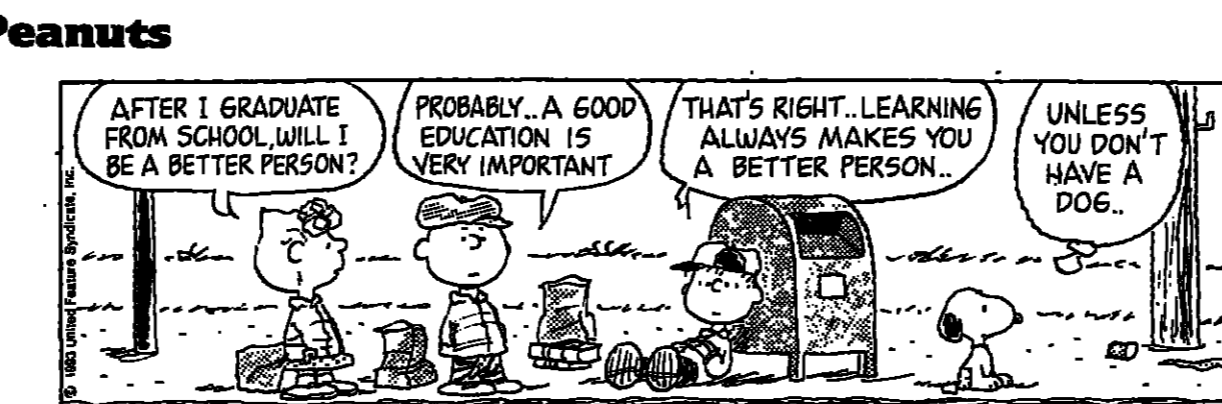
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: BEFT VOCAL MARKUP FROTHY
Answer: What they said when they held up the shop — FORK IT OVER

Peanuts



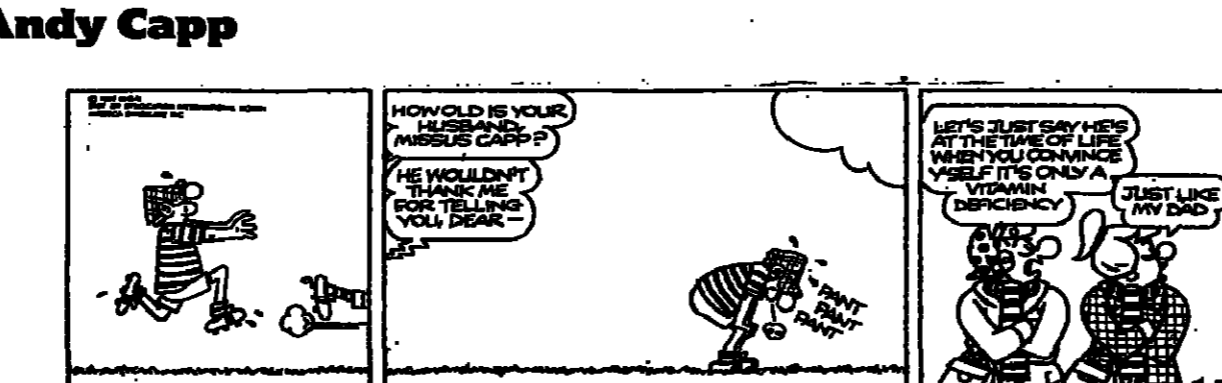
AFTER I GRADUATE FROM SCHOOL, WILL I BE A BETTER PERSON?

PROBABLY. A GOOD EDUCATION IS VERY IMPORTANT.

THAT'S RIGHT. LEARNING ALWAYS MAKES YOU A BETTER PERSON.

UNLESS YOU DON'T HAVE A DOG.

Andy Capp



HOW OLD IS YOUR MISTRESS CAP?

HE WOULDNT TALK ME FOR TELLING YOU DEAR

LET'S JUST SAY WHEN AT THE TIME OF LIFE WHEN YOU CONVINCE YOURSELF IT'S ONLY A VITAMIN DEFICIENCY JUST LIKE MY DAD

Mutt'n'Jeff



I'M THROUGH BEING A WOLF! I'M GOING TO SETTLE DOWN AND MARRY ENCEE!

ENCEE HONEY WE WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER! WILL YOU BE —

WILL I BE WHAT, JEFF?

— BE A GOOD GIRL AND GO TO BED!

OECD sees Hungary set for 'fragile' '94 recovery

PARIS (AFP) — The Hungarian economy, in the fourth year of market reforms, might decline further in 1993 but recovery should begin by the end of 1993 or in 1994, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has said.

However, it said, prospects for recovery "remain fragile... and depend on continued growth in exports in a slowing European market."

In a survey of the Hungarian economy, the OECD stressed that the focus of concerns had shifted dramatically over the past two years, with the budget deficit emerging as "the major macroeconomic imbalance and a complicating factor in Hungarian reform efforts."

The report highlighted the progress achieved since 1991, with moves to free prices and trade, engineer a shift toward market-based credit and interest rates, and end government subsidies.

But it acknowledged that the effect of the transition, and the "major shock" imparted by the collapse of trade with the former Soviet Union and other partners in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), had been "abrupt and wrenching."

Output dropped by 19 per cent in 1991-92, the jobless rate soared from almost zero in 1990 to 13 per cent, and inflation accelerated to touch 40 per cent before slowing to an estimated average of 20 per cent this year.

The report said that Hungarian authorities were now predicting GDP to stagnate or to fall further — by up to three per cent — this year, mainly because of sluggish exports due to weaker Western European demand than initially forecast,

but also as a result of agricultural production shortfalls. These were linked to last year's drought and disruption caused by changing ownership.

While investment was expected to stagnate this year, it should pick up in 1994, assuming a quickening pace of privatisation and more favourable credit terms, as well as continued foreign investment in flows.

Two years ago, the key concern was Hungary's low foreign exchange reserves and the servicing of its convertible currency debt, combined with rising inflation.

However, the OECD report said, "unexpectedly strong foreign investment and other capital inflows have allayed fears about the external balance" and greatly eased the debt servicing problem. Foreign debt stood at \$21.4 billion at the end of last year, down \$1.2 billion from end-1992.

The recession, described by the OECD as "surprisingly deep," was a major factor in Hungary's ballooning budget deficit, and sustained economic recovery could be threatened unless serious structural problems were tackled.

Hungary "cannot afford" its present, overly generous, system of social benefits and retirement payments, the report said, urging the government to tackle this problem.

Action was also needed to broaden "and more fully collect" existing taxes — rather than introduce new ones — in order to check an erosion of public revenue.

The OECD stressed the need to cut current fiscal spending to help reduce the government's share in the economy.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY OCTOBER 12, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Wright Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The best day of the month with five excellent aspects should be used wisely in whatever way you decide to improve immediate conditions around you. Conduct any discussion in a charming — special location.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Private plans and arrangements to gain more success in reducing your intimate goals to a reality can be achieved today but tonight don't upset any applicant.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Get in touch with good friends who understand you very well and let them know your new plan of life and accept their assistance for success.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You now find that you have a greater awareness of what one in power expects from you so go along with that person's wishes, tonight avoid public and lime-light.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get into whatever new interesting conditions arise that can be a good outlet for you to express your fondest expectations, then join a peaceful group.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is the moment for you to get into whatever obligations you have to understand them and any creditors and handle sensitive, tonight don't argue with mate.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Whatever you have in mind concerning public expansion and a new image can be put into motion righty but tonight don't make changes in routines.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A great day to get into whatever creative ideas you want to perfect or to put across, then you would be wise to avoid going out to see close companions.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Think over what your attachment most expects of you and try to carry through in as interesting a manner as you can, tonight avoid any extravagance.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Matters at home can reach a new high in efficiency and operative skill during the daytime but tonight make sure you don't force issues with anyone.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Let those with whom you have business contact know that you are alert to modern and up to date interests but tonight don't get into any schemes.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Go after what you want today with courage and confidence and expect assistance of any good friends but tonight don't be with a harping associate.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Your own ideas and judgement are excellent, and clear with good judgement and you can rely upon them today although tonight a bigwig could disappoint you.

THE Daily Crossword by Eugene Puffenberger

ACROSS

- Strip
- Chinese gale
- Traveler's stopover
- Its symbol is Fe
- Indian
- Related maternally
- Sign gas
- This string
- Played again
- Three Allens
- Electees
- Quid's note
- User
- Indistinct
- Space agency
- Bathhouse's husband
- Buffing beast
- Gourmand
- Three Thomases
- out (supplement)
- Perry's creator
- "and hungry look"
- Loch — monster
- Tittle
- Covered with turf
- Huzzah!
- Kind of show
- Part of a min.
- Three Williams
- Flight of steps
- Role
- Book or ledger
- Type of musical show
- He was slain by Cain
- Walking stick
- Appears
- "The — in Red"
- Plummet
- Increases in size
- Flying prefix
- Decorate again
- Actress Streep
- Kind of show
- 11 Weed
- 12 Lat. abbr.
- 13 Author Deighton
- 14 Decade
- 15 Evil spirit
- 16 Poet W.H. —
- 17 Male duck
- 18 Feast
- 19 Author Fleming
- 20 Singer Perton
- 21 Disc —
- 22 " — mild d'un
- 23 " — Marnet"
- 24 Suffering
- 25 Decade
- 26 Procession
- 27 Chytken — king
- 28 Its symbol is Na
- 29 In a tender fashion
- 30 Stringed instruments
- 31 Continguous
- 32 Suit to —
- 33 Church part
- 34 Gilead
- 35 All —
- 36 Alphabet run
- 37 Contiguous
- 38 Gilding
- 39 Suit to —
- 40 Church part
- 41 Gilead
- 42 All —
- 43 Stringed instruments
- 44 Contiguous
- 45 Suit to —
- 46 Church part
- 47 Gilead
- 48 All —
- 49 Alphabet run
- 50 Contiguous
- 51 Gilding
- 52 Suit to —
- 53 Church part
- 54 Gilead
- 55 All —

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Greek Socialists face troubled economy after election victory

ATHENS (R) — Veteran Socialist leader Andreas Papandreu met party officials Monday to discuss who should be in his cabinet and to set the course for Greece's troubled economy after winning Sunday's election.

Mr. Papandreu — brought down in 1989 by poor health, a public extramarital affair and corruption allegations — easily defeated his old-time rival, conservative Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis.

With 95 per cent of the vote counted, his Socialist Pasok Party was leading with 46.8 per cent. Mr. Mitsotakis's conservative New Democracy Party had 39.3 per cent.

Analysts said the Socialist lead would mean about 170 seats in the 300-seat parliament, to about 111 for the conservatives.

"The people have spoken with a big 'yes' to our proposal for a way out of the crisis and the reconstruction of our country," Mr. Papandreu, 74, said in a victory statement that focused on Greece's ailing economy.

Mr. Papandreu held a morning meeting, apparently to decide his cabinet after a long night of noisy celebrations, blasting air horns, and booming firecrackers.

The ailing economy and the ministers who would be responsible for turning it around were discussed during the meeting, Greek radio stations reported.

Mr. Papandreu's campaign and victory speech focused on "an economic policy that will secure economic stability and economic development."

Mr. Mitsotakis, 74, conceded defeat and announced he would start procedures for selecting his successor at the conservative party, honouring a campaign pledge.

"We took tough but necessary decisions for Greece's future and we paid the political cost. I'm deeply concerned. The country is about to go through a period of trial," he said.

Mr. Mitsotakis oversaw a severe three-and-a-half-year austerity programme which froze state wages, shed public

sector jobs, raised utility costs and slapped a 50 per cent tax on petrol.

But his tough policies were slow to produce results and a month of campaigning around Greece apparently failed to convince voters recovery was just around the corner.

He painted Mr. Papandreu as a dangerous tax-and-spend Socialist who bankrupted Greece during eight years in power from 1981 to 1989. But the Socialist leader has since softened some of his most radical policies.

European Community (EC) diplomats in Athens have been lukewarm to the idea of the unpredictable Papandreu back in power, especially because one of his first tasks will be to oversee Greece's turn as EC president, which begins in January and runs for six months.

The last time the Harvard-educated economist held office he delighted in siding with radical developing states against his EC and U.S. allies and caused dismay among EC partners with his policies of

heavy borrowing and free spending.

Mr. Papandreu was handed a crushing election defeat in his try for a third term in June 1989, dragged down by allegations of financial embezzlement and an extramarital affair. He also had open heart surgery.

He had his second wife, 38-year-old Dimitra Liani, at his side when he claimed victory Sunday and praised her for standing by him during his dark hours. They married shortly after his election defeat in June 1989.

Mr. Papandreu and his government will be sworn in by President Constantine Karamanlis, perhaps Thursday. He must then call a confidence vote in parliament within a week.

In other election results, the Interior Ministry said the nationalist Political Spring Party, run by Mr. Mitsotakis's former foreign minister, had 4.8 per cent, or about 10 seats. The hardline Greek Communist Party had 4.5 per cent, or about nine seats.



Greek Socialist leader Andreas Papandreu flashes 'elections Sunday. Mr. Papandreu is accompanied by his wife Dina (AFP photo)

2 Americans win Nobel Medicine Prize

STOCKHOLM (R) — Two researchers in the United States who independently discovered "split genes", which could help find new ways to treat diseases such as cancer, won the 1993 Nobel Medicine Prize Monday.

The Nobel Committee of Sweden's Karolinska Institute, which awards the annual prize under the will of the inventor of dynamite and philanthropist Alfred Nobel, gave it to British-born Richard Roberts and American Phillip Sharp.

Dr. Roberts and Dr. Sharp, working at different research laboratories in 1977, independently discovered that a gene could be composed of several separate segments, rather than one continuous one as previously thought.

"The discovery of split genes has been of fundamental im-

portance for today's basic research in biology, as well as for more medically oriented research concerning the development of cancer and other diseases," the Karolinska said.

The institute said the two men's discovery "has changed our view on how genes in higher organisms develop during evolution. The discovery also led to the prediction of a new genetic process, namely that of splicing."

Professor Gosta Gahrton, a professor of medicine at the Karolinska, told reporters: "Their discovery means we know more and gives us the possibility of finding more treatments."

The discovery of split genes "does not give us cures, but the possibility to know how we are going to do therapy with genes in the future," Prof. Gahrton added.

Dr. Roberts, 50, was born in Derby, England, graduated from Sheffield University and later worked as a research associate at Harvard University.

In 1972 he started work at Cold Spring Harbour Laboratory where he carried out the prize-winning research. Since 1992 he has been research director at New England Biolabs, Beverly, Massachusetts.

Dr. Sharp, 49, born in Falmouth, Kentucky, gained a doctorate in chemistry at the University of Illinois, Urbana. He also researched at the Cold Spring Harbour Laboratory, between 1971 and 1974, then moved to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Since 1991 Dr. Sharp has been head of the Department of Biology at the MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Russian parliament elections set for Dec. 12

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Elections for both chambers of the new Russian parliament are to be held on Dec. 12, according to a decree by President Boris Yeltsin published Monday.

Two deputies will be elected from each of Russia's 88 constituent regions to sit in the upper house known as the Federation Council.

The Lower House will be called the State Duma, the name it had under the Czar. The announcement came a day after a senior electoral official said all regions of the Russian Federation except Chechnya had agreed to hold local legislative elections on Dec. 12, as called for by Mr. Yeltsin.

Nikolai Ryabov, head of the government's Central Electoral Commission, said all regions had sent in the papers needed to hold elections, except for Chechnya, in the Caucasus and which declared itself independent from the federation in 1991.

There were concerns that some regions which backed the dissolved Soviet-era parliament in its recent clash with Mr. Yeltsin would refuse to hold December elections.

In particular the former Bashkir Republic expressed reservations about holding ballots. Chechnya, which has had an ongoing dispute with Moscow, has never been recognised as independent by Moscow.

Mr. Ryabov's comments came one day after Mr. Yeltsin ordered all of the federation's 88 members, except for republics, to set up new constituent assemblies, effectively doing away with the Soviets which have run Russia since 1917.

Mr. Ryabov said the elections would cost about 150-160 billion rubles (\$150 million) to organise.

Meanwhile, a majority of people surveyed in Moscow backed President Yeltsin's use of troops to suppress an opposition revolt, according to an opinion poll in this week's U.S. News and World Report.

But the magazine's poll said more than half doubted the end of the stand-off would accelerate moves towards economic and political reform, and almost two-thirds expect further bloodshed.

The telephone survey of 560 people said 62 per cent backed Mr. Yeltsin's use of the army to storm the Russian parliament, while 90 per cent supported his imposition of emergency rule in the aftermath of the revolt.

A slim majority backed his order closing down opposition political parties and newspapers.

However, 64 per cent said they expected more conflict and bloodshed in Moscow and other regions of Russia.

The poll was conducted Oct. 5-6 by the Moscow-based Institute for Comparative Social Research, in coordination with the magazine's pollsters.

Russian authorities are taking advantage of Moscow's state of emergency to crack down on the city's so-called "black bums" or illegal residents.

Khmer Rouge launches fierce Cambodia assault

O-SMACH, Cambodia (R) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas attacked a government-held town and surrounding villages in northwestern Cambodia Sunday, sending waves of people fleeing the renewed fighting.

Hundreds of ragged men, women and children were seen streaming south from the area Monday. Villagers said many civilians were wounded.

Major-General Sen Chamrong, the local government commander, told Reuters Monday at least 16 rebels were killed in the attacks on the market town of O-Smach and eight other villages close to the Thai frontier.

Thai military sources said at least four soldiers and six rebels were killed.

More than 2,000 civilians fled the town and villages, which Gen. Sen Chamrong said were all destroyed.

Soldiers said the guerrillas took three of the villages but government forces repelled them at O-Smach, also known as O Samit, after a furious morning gun battle lasting 4½ hours which left the market a blackened, smoldering ruin.

The road around the market was strewn with spent shell cases from small calibre weapons and recoilless rifles. Six soldiers were seriously injured in the assault, the commander said.

He said the rebels had launched the attack to relieve pressure on their northern stronghold of Anlung Veng and gain leverage in talks with

the government proposed for next month.

About 70 kilometres east of the town the Cambodian army was tightening its noose around the strategic Khmer Rouge headquarters town of Anlung Veng.

Local army commanders told Reuters the fighting would get worse if the Khmer Rouge rejected cooperation at the November talks, but there would be no concerted attempt to take Anlung Veng before then.

The Khmer Rouge, which killed a million Cambodians during its rule in the 1970s until ousted by Vietnam's invading army, wants an advisory role to the government. The government says it must first end its insurgency.

Gen. Sen Chamrong said the guerrillas' notorious northern region military commander, Ta Mok, had fled into the mountains near Anlung Veng, but was still directing the fighting.

Government commanders in Samrong said they had intercepted a message from him ordering the ambush of government units.

Gen. Sen Chamrong charged that the guerrillas involved in the attack around O-Smach were given transport by the Thai army and launched part of their assault from Thai territory.

He said Sunday morning Khmer Rouge soldiers were talking with Thai soldiers gathered around the border checkpoint overlooking the market.

5 die as rebels attack town in western Georgia

SAMTREDIA, Georgia (Agencies) — Rebels opposed to Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze attacked a strategic western town Monday, killing five soldiers and hampering relief efforts for thousands of refugees trapped in the mountains.

Tanks fired and artillery echoed outside the town of Samtredia, the latest front line to emerge from the conflict 30 kilometres from Georgia's second biggest city Kutaisi.

Officials in Samtredia, a town of 50,000 people, said five soldiers were killed in the attack. The rebels support Zviad Gamsakhurdia, a former Soviet-era dissident who was deposed as Georgia's first democratically-elected president in January 1992 by armed opponents accusing him of dictatorship.

He has since returned from exile and his forces have captured nine towns in his western homeland of Mingrelia, cutting off the capital Tbilisi's access to food and other European relief supplies coming to Black Sea ports.

The fighting between government troops and Mr. Gamsakhurdia's men has worsened the plight of Georgian refugees who fled from the Black Sea port of Sukhumi after it was captured by Abkhaz rebels in a separate rebellion last month.

Government officials say some 10,000 refugees are trapped in the Svaneti Mountains between the Abkhaz-held coast and inland districts held by pro-Gamsakhurdia forces.

Pro-Gamsakhurdia forces destroyed a television tower Sunday, blocking out broadcasts over much of western Georgia, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

"The attack blocked out

transmission to the whole of the Black Sea Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia," it said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Shevardnadze's call for his country to join the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has led to an open split in the Tbilisi leadership, with one party boss describing the move as "suicide."

Georgy Dzhanutia, head of the National Democratic Party, said Mr. Shevardnadze should resign if he pressed ahead with plans to join the CIS, and appeared to issue a veiled threat to topple the Georgian leader if he did so.

"It would be an act of suicide for Georgia and we are going to do everything possible to avoid it," Mr. Dzhanutia said Saturday. "Whatever our situation, we must not sign a pact with Russia."

Mr. Dzhanutia, who resigned from Georgia's State of Emergency Committee in protest at the proposal, said he had made it clear to Mr. Shevardnadze that his party would support him on condition that Georgia never joined the CIS, whatever the pressure from Moscow.

He warned that his party, which is well-armed and organised and is considered the most powerful in Tbilisi, was ready if necessary "to take over functions of the state, which in fact no longer exist."

Mr. Shevardnadze Friday said joining the CIS was "the last chance to save Georgia and avoid disintegration and civil war."

He asked parliament to support the move following talks with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, President Levon Ter-Petrosian of Armenia and President Geidar Aliyev of Azerbaijan.

Ex-aide tells Thatcher: Shut up and back Major

LONDON (R) — Margaret Thatcher's former press spokesman said Monday the ex-premier should shut up about British politics and support her successor John Major.

Sir Bernard Ingham, Mrs. Thatcher's abrasive press secretary from 1979 until 1990, was interviewed on BBC Radio after a weekend of furor over criticism of former colleagues in excerpts from his forthcoming memoirs, published in a Sunday newspaper.

Asked what advice he would give her, he said he would say: "You are going to make a lot of money out of this book. You have got it out of your system. Now get on with running your foundation, touring the world and talking to people, support John Major and shut up."

He re-enforced the message in an article in Monday's Daily Express headlined "Take the money and run, Maggie".

Mrs. Thatcher got damning notices from former colleagues she savaged in the extracts from The Downing Street Years, her poison-tipped memoirs of more than a decade as prime minister.

Friends-turned-foes Sunday accused her of writing a kind of "pseudo-history" and of plain "cock and bull" in her recollections of cabinet discussions and her removal in 1990.

Sir Bernard, who won a reputation for fierce loyalty to his boss while she was in office, expressed support for her criticism of former ministers Sir Geoffrey Howe, Nigel Lawson and Michael Heseltine.

"As far as I can see Mrs. Thatcher has told the truth of what happened while I was there with her. It accords with what I set down in my book," he said.

The Thatcher memoirs — to be published in full next week — have hung over Mr. Major as he is trying to unify his Conservative Party with a promise to return to "traditional values" after a year of splits and policy U-turns.

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Pakistan rivals scramble for allies

ISLAMABAD (R) — Benazir Bhutto, leader of the biggest party in Pakistan's hung parliament, and rival ex-Premier Nawaz Sharif held frenetic meetings with potential allies Monday to be the first to form a coalition government.

"I think we have the centre sewn up," said a spokesman for Ms. Bhutto, whose Pakistan People's Party (PPP) victory in two of four crucial provincial elections Saturday virtually assured her of the regional support she needs to recapture the post of prime minister.

The spokesman said Ms. Bhutto's PPP and its main ally, with 92 seats in the 217-seat National Assembly, had won the support of several independent and smaller parties, raising their total to 106. They need 109 for a majority.

"We are confident we can now win over the FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Area) representatives," he said. The eight lower house members from the semi-autonomous tribal regions bordering Afghanistan traditionally throw in their lot with whichever party forms the government.

Ms. Bhutto, 40-year-old daughter of Pakistan's first

popularly elected prime minister and the Muslim world's first elected woman leader, said Sunday she was confident of forming the government in Islamabad and in the two most populous provinces of Punjab and Sindh.

She telephoned her rival Mr. Sharif late Sunday and congratulated him as runner-up, a spokesman said.

"I look forward to working in cooperation with you," a spokesman quoted Ms. Bhutto as saying. "We expect to form a government and we hope you will cooperate as leader of the opposition."

Mr. Sharif told Ms. Bhutto he too was trying to form a government.

Ms. Bhutto was sacked from the prime ministership three years ago on allegations of misuse after just 20 months in office, but her charisma and family name gave her a head start over rivals in last Wednesday's national elections.

She said she would be able to prove her parliamentary strength when the new National Assembly votes for a house leader on Oct. 19 despite the hung parliament elected Wednesday.

Mr. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML) gained 72

seats and was wooing smaller, independent parties.

Mr. Sharif, who won in a third province in Saturday's closely contested elections, called a meeting of his newly elected members of parliament in Islamabad and was in fighting mood.

"We are as strong as anyone else," he told Reuters. "We are as powerful as any other party."

"Whoever forms a government will have to seek the support of smaller parties and groups and we are trying also."

With large opposition parties in the two provinces that Ms. Bhutto won, Mr. Sharif looked certain to prove a tough opponent in Pakistan's highly personalised and Machiavellian politics.

Asked how he would work if in opposition, Mr. Sharif replied: "As the opposition usually behaves — not as in Pakistan but as in Western countries."

As opposition leader, Ms. Bhutto launched a campaign to topple Mr. Sharif and, allied with former enemies, finally forced his resignation in July. Mr. Sharif himself had been chiefly responsible for Ms. Bhutto's fall from office in 1990.

Angolan rebels 'plan' attack on Cuito

LUANDA (R) — The Angolan government accused UNITA rebels Monday of mobilising a 1,000-strong force for an imminent attack on the besieged central highland city of Cuito.

Government military sources in Luanda told state-run media UNITA was concentrating the men around the nearby towns of Andulo, Camacupa and Chinguar.

"It appears they are preparing a serious attack," said one military source quoted by the

state news agency Angop.

No other details were given. The government says 20,000 people, mostly civilians, have died from wounds, disease and hunger since UNITA began its siege of Cuito nine months ago. The casualty figures cannot be independently confirmed.

Fighting has died down considerably in Cuito since UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) declared a unilateral ceasefire last month. The govern-

ment and many diplomats have dismissed the truce as a sham.

International humanitarian groups say security has prevented them from flying in urgent supplies and that except for sporadic government air drops Cuito is being starved of food and medicine.

The U.N. special representative in Angola, Alioune Blondin Beye, said Sunday his organisation had government permission to resume aid flights but he was still awaiting guarantees from UNITA.

Russian sailors turn ship into floating currency

LONDON (R) — Hard-up Russian sailors sold uniforms, cap badges and naval equipment when they visited Britain to rustle up cash to buy radios, stereos, CDs and electric appliances to take home. Monday's Times newspaper reported on its front page that when the Russian training ship "Gangut" docked in Dartmouth, in southwest England, its crew poured ashore to hawk their wares with the enthusiasm of true capitalists.

The Russian lads were amazing. They turned the town into one huge market, one local resident, who had bought a cap from a sailor told the Times. "Literally everything they had (on the ship) which was not nailed down seemed to be on sale."

On Sunday the Gangut set sail for home, a little lower in the water with its weight of booty bought from British department stores, which will be sold in turn in the streets and bars of Russia at considerably higher prices. The Times added: "The crew will be praying that the Russian Defence Ministry takes a lenient view of its property being used as hard currency."

Survey: Most Tokyo residents are xenophobic

TOKYO (AFP) — Most Tokyo residents are xenophobic, have a poor impression of foreigners living in the Japanese capital and are concerned about their growing numbers, a survey said. Respondents complained that foreigners did not respect Japanese rules and habits, had bad manners and congregated in large groups, the survey said.

The survey, published in the Mainichi newspaper, was carried out by the Tokyo City Government among 3,000 residents of three districts in the capital with high concentrations of foreigners. Without giving the exact percentage of respondents hostile to foreigners, the Mainichi said two thirds of those questioned had opposed an increase in the 1.3 million-strong foreign population.

The overwhelming majority of foreigners living legally in Japan are from Asian countries, with Americans numbering 50,000 and Europeans 30,000. Authorities say 250,000 foreigners are in the country illegally. Many of them in the construction industry and jobs Japanese consider dangerous or dirty.

Snake sends driver slithering to a stop

LONDON (R) — A British woman found her hire car came complete with an unwelcome extra — a deadly cobra constrictor. The snake, which crushes its prey to death, slithered along the windshield of the Ford Escort as she was driving near Caterick in northern England Saturday.

Terrified, she scrambled from the car and phoned police, but by the time a patrol arrived, the snake had disappeared into the car's ventilation system. Police and the owner of a local pet shop were unable to retrieve the snake so the car was transported to the hire company's depot in York. Further attempts were planned to catch the reptile, there was no immediate explanation of where it came from. "Understandably the woman wasn't going to get back into the car for anybody," said a police spokesman.

Australian unearth giant reptile skull

PERTH (R) — Australian palaeontologists have unearthed a skull of a giant reptile thought to be 110 million years old and so heavy it had to be lifted out by helicopter. Palaeontologist John Long of the Western Australian Museum said Monday the complete and undamaged skull — measuring half a metre (20 inches) from the back to the tip of the snout — was believed to be either a dinosaur or a marine reptile. The skull, dating from the early Cretaceous period (140-65 million years ago) of the Mesozoic Era, was found poking out of a 200 kilogramme block of sandstone last week near the isolated coastal town of Kalbarri, 600 kilometres north of Perth.

"This is one of the best skulls of a Mesozoic Era reptile ever found on the Australian continent," Mr. Long, who found the skull, said in an interview. "It is extremely rare to find skulls from the age of dinosaurs in Australia, particularly one that is complete and undamaged," he said.

Handwritten text in Arabic script.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Seles may play at Australian Open

MELBOURNE (R) — Monica Seles plans to defend her title at the Australian Open in January. Her first Grand Slam event since being stabbed at a tournament in Germany last April. Australian tennis officials said Monday. "All indications are that Monica Seles will defend her title, despite her long break due to the horrific stabbing in Hamburg earlier this year," Tennis Australia President Geoff Pollard told a news conference. "I spoke to her manager during the week who told me that Monica had her sight very definitely on a comeback in time for the open," Pollard said. Last week Seles's agents confirmed the 19-year-old would play in Dublin in December, her first appearance since a spectator stuck a meat-trimming knife into her back at the Hamburg Open. "She has a lot of computer points at stake and doesn't want to miss another Grand Slam," Pollard said. Pollard said the men's and women's events at the open from Jan. 17 to 30 would each include 18 of the world's top 20 ranked players, with total prize money of Australian dollars 8.16 million (\$5.35 million).

Senna, Hill to drive for Williams

LONDON (AFP) — Ayrton Senna will team up with Damon Hill for the all-conquering Williams Renault team in next year's Formula One World Motor Racing Championship. Williams said Monday the triple world champion from Brazil would replace Frenchman Alain Prost who is retiring after winning his fourth world title. Hill, son of the late Graham Hill, has won three Grand Prix for Williams on his first year in the big time. Both men are 33. Senna is leaving McLaren with whom he won his third world title in 1991 because the team were unable to find an engine supplier to rival the Renault partnership with Williams. McLaren's problems started when Honda pulled out of Formula One racing. McLaren, who have signed a deal with Peugeot for next season, have yet to name a replacement for Senna. Prost returned to Grand Prix racing with Williams when Nigel Mansell went to the United States this year and became the first man to win Formula One and IndyCar Championships in successive seasons.

Delecour forges ahead in San Remo Rally

SAN REMO, Italy (AFP) — French driver Francois Delecour, trying to close the gap in the World Championship on Juha Kankkunen, forged ahead after the first five specials here Monday in the San Remo Rally. The Finnish driver has not been entered by his Toyota team who secured the world constructors title during the Rally of Australia. Delecour led Italy's Piero Liatti (Subaru Legacy) by 59 seconds and Ford Escort teammate Massimo Biasion of Italy by 1min 7sec. The 1,726km rally finishes Wednesday.

Joe Montana, meet Joe Montana

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AFP) — Twenty-two of the 28 inhabitants of Joe, Montana, wound up their weekend visit here by watching the Chiefs-Bengals NFL game. But their town's namesake was not in action. Chiefs quarterback Joe Montana sat out the game with a pulled hamstring, but the Joe, Montana, residents did not seem to mind too much. "It's like we've been in Oz and we've got to go back home tomorrow to Kansas," said Wayne Rieger, town clerk and fire chief in the tiny village of Joe, in southeastern Montana, which changed its name from Ismay last summer. The visitors met Montana and his wife in a meeting closed to the media at the quarterback's insistence. "We spent about a half-hour with Joe Friday," Rieger said. "He came out and told us he was very pleased with what we were doing, except sometimes he just does not know what to say when the press asks him about it because all his teammates tease him." Rieger said Montana's absence from Sunday's game was a bit disappointing. "But that can't tarnish the great times we've had," he added. Rieger said the town of Joe had asked Joe to come visit any time. "He said he has friends in Montana he hopes to get to see, and he may get over to see us," Rieger said.

Boxer remains in coma

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Clarimundo Silva remained in a coma in critical condition, two days after his national middleweight title bout that was stopped in the eighth round. Silva, 36, slipped into the coma after the referee stopped his fight and awarded the victory to 27-year-old Ezequiel Pazos, who won all seven previous rounds. Silva, a former South American champion, was taken to a hospital in Sao Paulo, where the fight was held, and received emergency surgery.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
AND TAMARA HIRSCH
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South that action.
You hold:
AKQ108 ♠AQJ98 ♠QJ62
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you bid now?
A.—"This is a matter of system. If you play that an immediate cue-bid of opener's suit is a game-forcing takeout, this is the hand for such action. If you use the immediate cue-bid for some other purpose, then you must start with a takeout double and cue-bid on a subsequent round."
- Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AKQ8882 ♠7 ♠QJ97 ♠A72
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ NT Pass ?
What action do you take?
A.—With two aces, a singleton and three trumps headed by an honor, slam prospects are promising, perhaps even a grand slam. Start off by bidding four diamonds. When you take out of game into a minor-suit partial, that's a strong bid, indicating lofty ambitions.
- Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKQ4 ♠A109 ♠862 ♠QJ62
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 1 ♠ ?
What do you bid now?
A.—Clearly, it's a choice between a club raise and one no trump. With your balanced 10 points, if you side bid a game, it is most likely to be in no trump, so why not tell partner that immediately? Bid one no trump. You hold a maximum for
- Q.4—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKQ88 ♠AQJ10 ♠QKQ ♠Q8
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ NT What do you bid now?
A.—You have an excellent hand with superb trump support, but it is not quite good enough to insist on game, especially since the guess of clubs might not be a working card. Invite game by jumping to three hearts.
- Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AKQ82 ♠1065 ♠EJ5 ♠J9
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ NT
What do you bid now?
A.—You have a known eight-card fit in a major suit, and there's no reason why you shouldn't tell partner about it right away. Raise to three hearts.
- Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AKQ10 ♠A8732 ♠K88 ♠107
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ 1 ♠ 2 ♠ 1 ♠
What do you bid now?
A.—If you elected to bid one heart, it's time to dust off your bidding primer. Since you would have to bid one heart with nothing in your hand, you must do something better with 10 high-card points, even though three of them represent the king in the enemy suit. Jump to two hearts. That's simply value-showing, not forcing.

Casablanca hero lets Morocco play it again

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — When Abdesslem Laghrissi stopped to conquer in Casablanca this weekend he became an instant national hero in Morocco, and a villain in the rest of Africa.

A diving header from Laghrissi soon after half-time gave Morocco victory over Zambia, and a third appearance in the World Cup finals.

Every African nation wanted Zambia, who lost 18 players in an air crash off Gabon last April, to secure the point which would have taken the rebuilt team to the finals for the first time.

But Morocco, who seven years ago became the first African nation to progress beyond the first round of the World Cup finals, refused to be swept aside by a tidal wave of African emotion.

After a disappointing 1990 World Cup campaign, which ended in first round elimination, Morocco plunged to new depths in the 1992 African Nations' Cup finals.

Needing a victory over Zaire to reach the second stage, Morocco snatched an 89th minute lead only to concede a goal straight from the restart.

The team returned home in

disgrace. German coach Werner Olk was fired, and ageing heroes like goalkeeper Badoz Zaki and striker Aziz Boudabala were consigned to the scrapheap.

A World Cup draw which paired Morocco with traditional rivals Tunisia presented problems, but the Lions of the Atlas squeezed through after their rivals dropped a point in Ethiopia.

Morocco made a poor second round debut against Senegal in Casablanca, Mohammed Chaouch netting the only goal just six minutes before the final whistle.

But after failing in Zambia, Morocco raised their game to triumph convincingly in Senegal, and set up a thrilling finale against Kalusha Bwalya-inspired Zambia.

Nourredine Naybet, one of the defensive kingpins of Morocco, who have impressive midfielders in Mustapha Al Haddadi and Rachid Daoudi.

Up front, Chaouch is the dangerman, having scored five of the 19 goals in the qualifying campaign while Daoudi and Yunes Fertout struck three each.

Zambia appealed to FIFA, the world soccer's governing body, Monday for their World Cup qualifier against Morocco to be replayed.

The Zambian FA blamed the Gabonese referee for their 1-0 defeat in Sunday's match in Casablanca which eliminated them from the World Cup. A draw would have seen Zambia through to the finals being staged next year in the United States.

"We hope FIFA will agree to our suggestion that we have a re-match," Adrian Bauleni. The general secretary of the Football Association of Zambia (FAZ), told Reuters.

WORLD CUP

Bauleni criticised the Gabonese referee and his men for being "poor, biased and intimidatory."

The move is the latest in a war of words between Zambia and Gabon, Zambia lost 18 of their top players and officials in a plane crash just off the Gabonese coast in April.

Since then Zambia has accused Gabon of failing to cooperate in investigating the crash and last month Zambia asked FIFA to appoint a new

referee for the match in Morocco, saying Gabonese officials would not be neutral. Soccer fans flooded to the FAZ offices Monday, many angry about the way the match was officiated.

The majority of them felt Zambia should have been awarded a penalty in the dying moments and that the referee had ignored several fouls on Zambians.

Meanwhile, Francois Omam-Biyik made a timely return to the centre stage at the weekend to ensure Cameroon became the first African nation to reach successive World Cup finals.

The French-based professional scored twice before half-time as the Indomitable Lions defeated Zimbabwe 3-1 in front of 80,000 fans shooshorned into a stadium built for considerably fewer.

Omam-Biyik headed the goal which gave the Central African nation a sensational

victory over defending champions Argentina in the opening match of the 1990 finals in Italy.

He had failed to score in seven qualifiers but struck terror into the heart of Zimbabwe goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar on an on-sports stadium pitch made treacherous by rain.

Unlike their 1990 campaign when they had to overcome formidable foes like Nigeria and Tunisia, Cameroon booked a passport to the United States next June without undue difficulty.

In the first round, the Indomitable Lions struck five goals past Swaziland in Yaounde, then achieved a notable win in Zaire to reserve a second-round spot.

Danish-based Alphonse Tchami twice as Cameroon overcame rejuvenated Guinea 3-1 at home before losing 1-0 to Zimbabwe. Their sole defeat of the qualifying competition.

But the wounded Lions fought back to achieve a significant success in Guinea, despite having to play more than half the match with 10 men after defender Victor Ndiip was sent off.

Nigeria, for years the nearly men of African football with just one continental title to their name, qualified for the World Cup finals for the first time with a 1-1 draw away to Algeria Friday.

African coaches have recently expressed the view that it will not be long before one of their nations wins the world game's senior competition.

Following Nigeria's world under-17 title last month in an all-African final against 1991 winners Ghana. Their coach Fanny Ikhyere Amun said: "I am convinced that African countries could win the senior World Cup by 2002."

Morocco were the first African nation to reach the World Cup finals in 1970 in Mexico.

England to gamble for World Cup victory in Netherlands

ROTTERDAM (R) — The stakes could not be higher when World Cup foes the Netherlands and England clash in a crucial, winner-takes-all battle Wednesday.

Defeat for either side effectively slams the door to U.S. '94 firmly in their faces. But victory will virtually guarantee their entry into December's draw in Las Vegas for next year's finals.

England, never beaten in the Netherlands but without a win over the Dutch for 11 years, intend gambling on going for the victory that assures them of a place in the finals in the hope of at least being rewarded with a point.

While a draw leaves the door open for both sides — they would still be level on points behind group two leaders Norway — it would suit England more as their final game is against minnows San Marino and the Dutch visit Poland.

Even so, manager Graham Taylor refuses to play for a point in front of the sell-out 48,000 crowd at the Feyenoord Stadium, saying it is not in England's nature and that they must chase victory.

"The worst thing we can do is to go over to Holland and come back without a result and not look as if we went for it," said Taylor. "You can easily lose by playing for a draw. But if you play for a win sensibly, you

might actually get a draw.

"We are going to look for the result we are capable of getting that will take us a giant step forward to the U.S.," he said. "Our confidence is high."

Three of the last four meetings between the sides have ended in draws. But the Dutch, who came back from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 in London in April, hold the not insignificant boast of the last victory, in the 1988 European Championship.

England midfielder David Platt considers Wednesday's game to be their biggest since the 1990 World Cup semifinal defeat by Germany.

"This is a massive match. There's such an enormous prize at the end of it," he said. "One of us is going to be a step closer to the finals and one of us is going to be a step back — and looking for a miracle."

The result may rest upon who is missing as much as who plays, with both teams weakened by injuries and suspensions.

The Dutch have to make do without injured Marco Van Basten and international exile Ruud Gullit, while the English miss suspended midfielder Paul Gascoigne and injured forward Les Ferdinand.

Jan Wouters, the tough and influential Bayern Munich midfielder player, has a calf strain but expects to be fit, while England wait anxiously

to see if minor injuries to striker Ian Wright and defenders Tony Adams and captain Stuart Pearce clear up.

On the bright side for England, Blackburn striker Alan Shearer is set to return for his first international since scoring against Turkey in November.

He had scored twice in six games for England before a serious knee ligament injury put him out of the game in January, but four goals in his four full games since returning bodes well.

The Dutch are slightly anxious about the game and Feyenoord trainer Willem Van Hanegon said: "I'm cautious and also a bit worried because Holland haven't achieved much in their last few outings."

"If the Dutch side's technique lets them down," then effort and attitude will be decisive. The English are physically stronger and harder on themselves."

Former Dutch goalkeeper Hans Van Breukelen, who won 73 caps and played for Nottingham Forest, says: "The pressure is on the Netherlands. We have to win. If we only draw England will do what they have to do against San Marino and we will be out of the World Cup."

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Nigel Benn throws a right-hand blow at opponent Chris Eubank (left) during their Super-middleweight title fight at Old Trafford, in Manchester, late Saturday night (AFP photo)

WBC moves to defuse Benn row

LONDON (AFP) — The World Boxing Council (WBC) has published the judges' scorecards in an attempt to defuse the row over Saturday's drawn super-middleweight world title fight in Manchester.

The figures emphasise how much holder Nigel Benn's low blows cost him in the fight against Chris Eubank. Benn dominated the second half of the fight, according to New Jersey Judge Carol Castellano, who gave him the last six rounds. U.K. veteran Harry Gibbs made the same six rounds three each, while California's Chuck Hasset saw them 4-2 against Eubank. WBC supervisor Ray Clarke

said he decided to release the scoring details "in view of the wide interest the contest and result have aroused." This may have been an understated reference to the vocal dissatisfaction of the Benn camp in particular, whose anger at the "judgement day" draw has been simmering since Saturday.

"I thought I won by three rounds, even allowing for the deducted point. I was ripped off. I was hard done by."

fumed Benn. Clarke criticised the suggested rule change co-promoter Don King, endorsed by Frank Warren, that judges' cards should be made available for scrutiny after every round.

"This was a very close contest and not easy to score. Many rounds could have gone either way," said Clarke. "I am perfectly satisfied with the scoring of the judges and the performance of the referee."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Islamist elected to Yemen's ruling body

SANAA (AFP) — The Yemeni parliament elected a Muslim fundamentalist to the ruling presidential council for the first time on Monday. Sheikh Abdul Majid Zaidani, a leader of the fundamentalist Al Islah party which finished second in the last general election, was elected to the five member council headed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Al Islah won 61 of the 300 seats in April's elections, behind the 121 of the ruling General People's Congress (GPC) but ahead of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), which took 45. Parliament reelected GPC Deputy General Secretary Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, leader Ali Salem Al Baid and his deputy Salem Saleh Mohammad to the council. The Socialists governed South Yemen until May 1990 when the country united with North Yemen, which was ruled by the GPC. Under a power-sharing agreement the former presidential council comprised three GPC and two YSP officials. The YSP had insisted that it keep two members in the new council and Al Islah be granted only one seat. Monday's voting was unanimous.

Saudi human rights activists released

NICOSIA (AFP) — Saudi authorities have released a number of detained intellectuals connected to an Islamic human rights organisation, the London-based Liberty group said in a statement received here Monday. The scholars, lawyers and university professors were linked to the Saudi Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights (CDLR), the British human rights organisation said. But it said the CDLR spokesman, Mohammad Al Masari, arrested last May, "is still held in detention due to his refusal to pledge not to associate himself with any political activity." "It seems that this has been the condition required by the authorities in exchange for the release of the rest of the detainees." The Saudi authorities also wanted "to prevent an escalation in tension with academic circles before the new academic year starts," it said. The move aims at the same time at "improving the image of the kingdom abroad following the serious deterioration in the record of human rights in the past few years," it added. Liberty did not say how many people were freed or give their identities. The organisation has reported the arrest of some 50 members and sympathisers of the CDLR during the past few months. CDLR, created on May 3, 1993, was immediately banned by the authorities. Political parties are illegal in Saudi Arabia. The Liberty group statement follows an Amnesty International report published on Sept. 12, that said the persecution of minority religious groups, especially Shiites and Christians, had considerably risen in Saudi Arabia since the 1991 Gulf war with Iraq.

Iranian official due in Baghdad Saturday

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif is scheduled to visit Baghdad Saturday for high-level talks with Iraqi officials, Iranian newspapers reported Monday. Mr. Zarif, who will be the first Iranian official to visit Iraq since the 1991 Gulf war, is to discuss bilateral ties and exchange views on regional and international problems. The plan for the deputy-minister's visit was announced last week following a meeting between Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati and his Iraqi counterpart Mohammad Said Al Sahaf on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York. The head of the Iranian parliament's Defence Committee, Ahmad Salek, said Friday that Mr. Velayati was also scheduled to visit Iraq to discuss the ceasefire signed between the two countries after their 1980-1988 war. The foreign minister's visit to Baghdad, however, has not been officially confirmed.

Afghan elections await approval

KABUL (AFP) — The mechanism for Afghanistan's first general election has been formulated by a special commission and now awaits approval by a high council which will include the major factional leaders, an official said Monday. "We announced the completion of our work last night and now the leaders should convene a meeting to approve our formula for the elections," said Mas'ud Ahmadzai, chairman of the nine-member election commission. As the high council, which should comprise between 30 and 60 members has not yet been inaugurated, it has been agreed that the factional leaders themselves should assume the responsibility for the council's decisions. But, of the nine main faction leaders, only five are currently residing in Afghanistan. "We have sent letters to the leaders' headquarters advising them that the high council should meet to approve the election formula," said Mr. Qasem.

Rebels kill demobilised soldiers in Turkey

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey (R) — Kurdish rebels ambushed a bus carrying a group of demobilised servicemen in southeast Turkey, killing at least five of them, security officials said Monday. A further 23 demobilised soldiers were wounded when guerrillas of the separatist Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) raked the bus with automatic weapons fire near the town of Adakli in Bingol province on Sunday, they added. The men were returning home after having completed their military services. Turkish security forces continued operations in southeast Turkey and northern Iraq. Backed by warplanes and helicopter gunships, some 2,000 Turkish army commandos were sweeping a wide area in northern Iraq south of Hakkari province to flush PKK militants from mountain hideouts, the officials said. The PKK use bases in the area to carry out cross border attacks on Turkish military, government and civilian targets. It was the biggest military operation by Turkey in northern Iraq since October last year when it sent in 20,000 soldiers to destroy PKK mountain camps.

Egypt plans office in South Africa

CAIRO (R) — Egypt will open a representative office in South Africa as a first step towards full diplomatic relations, its foreign ministry said Monday. The statement did not say when Egypt, currently chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), would open its office. It said Egypt would start full diplomatic relations with South Africa after an April 1994 general election to move the country towards a non-racial democracy. "Egypt aims through these constructive relations to stress its encouragement to the democratic change. Egypt will continue to monitor the developments in South Africa closely to achieve the objective which the South Africans have fought for — a democratic non-racial state," the statement said. Like many countries, Egypt refused to have ties with South Africa because of its policy of apartheid racial segregation.

Khartoum, rebel faction hold peace talks

KHARTOUM (AFP) — A Sudanese government delegation and a team from a breakaway faction of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) recently held talks in Bentiu in South Sudan's Upper Nile state, state-run television reported. The government side was led by the rapporteur of the peace committee in the Transitional National Assembly, Mousa Sidahmad, while the SPLA-United faction delegation was headed by Justine Atem. The television late Sunday showed pictures of Mr. Sidahmad speaking at a gathering at Bentiu after emerging from the meeting. Mr. Sidahmad described as "successful" his meeting with Mr. Atem which he said had discussed all peace issues that have been on the agenda in the fourth round of peace talks. The two sides agreed on the need for maintaining peace and stability in the Bentiu area and on leaving the door open to dialogue both inside Sudan and abroad. Mr. Sidahmad added that they also agreed that the sole option for resolving the south Sudan question was a peaceful settlement. The SPLA-United has broken away from the mainstream SPLA of Colonel John Garang, which has been fighting since 1983 for an end to domination of mainly Christian and animist south Sudan by the Islamic north. This meeting was not announced in advance nor was it covered by the local media, except for the report carried by the television which did not say exactly when it took place.

China shies away from larger role in Mideast

Combined agency dispatches

PEKING — China wants to play a role in the Middle East, but it will be a "quite limited" one, Prime Minister Jitzhak Rabin was told here Monday in the first visit to Peking by an Israeli premier.

Mr. Rabin told Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng that Israel "would be happy to see China more involved" in the Middle East peace process, an Israeli diplomat said.

Mr. Li replied: "China's role is quite limited but we are willing to play our role."

The two leaders agreed that last month's accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Palestinian self-rule was a "very sound beginning and actually a breakthrough in the Middle East peace process." Foreign Ministry spokesman Wu Jianmin told journalists.

"The question of Palestine constitutes the crux of the Middle East issue. The breakthrough with regard to the question of Palestine will certainly inject vitality into the Middle East peace talks," Mr. Wu quoted Mr. Li as telling Mr. Rabin, who arrived Sunday.

"However, it may be inevitable to run into difficulties or obstacles in the course of implementing the accords," Mr. Li said, urging both sides to



Israeli Prime Minister Jitzhak Rabin Monday walks past a guard dressed in Ming dynasty warrior outfit during a tour at the Badaling section of the Great Wall (AFP photo)

out the "Islamic fundamentalists' threat to Israel," Mr. Propper said.

The meeting, the first since China established diplomatic ties with Israel in January 1992, followed a red carpet welcoming ceremony featuring a 19-gun military salute and renditions of the two countries' national anthems by a 60-piece military band in the drizzle outside the Great Hall of the People.

Israeli embassy press attache Eyal Propper said the first talks between Mr. Rabin and Mr. Li did not broach the sale of Chinese arms and suspected nuclear reactor material to the Middle East, to such countries as Syria, Iran and Iraq.

But Mr. Rabin made it clear that Israel was concerned ab-

out the "Islamic fundamentalists' threat to Israel," Mr. Propper said.

The meeting, the first since China established diplomatic ties with Israel in January 1992, followed a red carpet welcoming ceremony featuring a 19-gun military salute and renditions of the two countries' national anthems by a 60-piece military band in the drizzle outside the Great Hall of the People.

Mr. Rabin's five-day stay comes less than one month after PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's visit fast on the heels of his signing the pact with Mr. Rabin.

Diplomats are looking for signs that China lines up with Arab states that back the PLO deal.

Mr. Rabin, who doubles as defence minister, is scheduled to meet Chinese Defence Minister Chi Haotian, underscoring persistent rumours of secret Israeli arms sales.

Mr. Wu said Peking's arms exports to Middle East countries hostile to Israel were not discussed in the morning talks and no Chinese military or security officials were present. Mr. Wu defended China's "principled" arms exports, saying sales were allowed only for purchasing countries' self-defence and must contribute to regional stability.

Mr. Li accepted Mr. Rabin's invitation to visit Israel but the spokesman gave no details.

Mr. Wu said he could not comment on reports that China would complement its Tel Aviv embassy with a consulate in occupied Jerusalem. Israel is expected to open a consulate in Shanghai.

Israel industrialists accompanying Mr. Rabin are expected to conclude an agreement for a potash plant in China costing more than \$400 million, the China daily said.

Despite crises, Jordan posts highest growth among ESCWA countries

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan achieved the highest annual economic growth in 1992, among the 13 member countries of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), despite the severe repercussions of the Gulf crisis on the Kingdom, an ESCWA study said Monday.

The study, released at a meeting of the U.N. agency's Technical Committee which opened in Amman (see page 3), said, however, that the growth was expected to decline in 1993 and depended largely on a combination of factors and Jordan's ability to find alternate markets for exports and sources for aid.

Jordan is also adversely affected by a switch in the regional trend in employment after the 1990-91 Gulf crisis, it said.

"The unemployment problem has been aggravated by the loss of employment opportunities in the Gulf and by recruitment policies that generally favour labour from outside the region and discriminate against nationals of some member countries, a practice which emerged in the wake of the Gulf crisis," said the report in a summary of the regional situation.

The report said a boom in construction activity was the main factor behind the eight

per cent growth in real terms achieved by Jordan in 1992.

Severely hit by the Gulf crisis and war, the country has managed to significantly reduce the severe consequences of the crisis reflected in the return of more than a quarter of a million Jordanians and Palestinians from Kuwait and the disruption of trade and economic relations with the (Gulf Cooperation Council - GCC) countries and Iraq, the latter being its principal source of foreign exchange (remittances, earnings from exports, soft loans and grants)," noted the 140-page report.

The report, which reviewed the economic conditions and performance of the ESCWA member states, which include the oil-producing Gulf states, in 1992, noted that the Jordanian performance was "highly significant, given the presumed high vulnerability of the Jordanian economy to external influences and shocks."

The report, which attributed the "robust upswing" of the Jordanian economy to the "boom in the construction sector," noted that expatriate savings were the main component that helped the Kingdom improve its economy.

It estimated that the construction sector had grown by 15 per cent and the manufacturing sector, boosted by new

investments, grew by 14 per cent.

The agriculture sector also improved and is expected to register a 10 per cent increase in output this year, it said.

"Progress in implementing economic reform measures has enabled Jordan to scale down its internal and external imbalances considerably, enhancing in the process its international credit standing, which in turn produced positive effects on external debt and inflation," added the report.

Jordan's fiscal budget is also showing signs of good performance as reflected in the projections for 1993, it said. Budget deficit has been brought down to eight per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) compared to 28 per cent in 1988, and for the first time, domestic revenues will be adequate to cover government consumption expenditures and over 40 per cent of its investment outlays, it noted.

It also pointed out that Jordan had managed to bring down the ratio of foreign debt to gross national product (GNP) to 150 per cent from 220 per cent.

Although Jordan registered a 6.5 per cent increase in its exports despite the closure of the Iraqi market as a result of the international sanctions imposed against that country, the Kingdom faces a long way ahead in

bringing about a better balance in imports and exports.

The report predicted a slower but satisfactory economic growth in Jordan in 1993. "Actual performance will largely depend on success in attracting additional investment (foreign and domestic), ability to find alternate sources of aid and export outlets..." it said. Senior officials have said that the 1993 growth was expected to be six per cent.

Another factor mentioned in the report was the high unemployment rate in Jordan and the diminished chances of a return of a large number of Jordanian workers to the Gulf.

"Migrant workers who had been forced to leave the GCC countries as a consequence of the Gulf crisis and war and who cannot return are mostly Arabs: Yemenis, Jordanians, Palestinians and Sudanese," said the report. "The current state of inter-Arab political relations does not indicate that the trend is likely to be reversed soon."

It estimated that Jordan lost at least \$547 million in revenues from port and cargo handling as well as transport charges since the imposition of the United Nations sanctions against Iraq in August 1990, noting that the tonnage passing through Aqaba fell from 5,667 million tonnes in 1989 to 1,927 million tonnes in 1992.

Algeria executes 3 Islamist activists; dam project attacked

ALGIERS (AFP) — The Algerian security services on Monday executed 13 Muslim fundamentalists convicted of extremist attacks by special courts here and in Constantine and Oran, the Justice Ministry said.

Six others also sentenced to face the firing squads were given a presidential pardon, the statement said, without giving further details.

The executions came a day after an armed Islamic extremist gang murdered a professor of medicine, Djillali Belkhenchir, 52, in his consulting room at an Algiers hospital, according to officials.

Suspected fundamentalists have killed 13 Algerian intellectuals in attacks since last March.

Algerian security services meanwhile said Monday that an armed group has destroyed the property of the Yugoslav dam construction firm Hydroelectra at Ouzra in the Medea region west of here.

The group Sunday set ablaze a trailer serving as site offices and eight other vehicles belonging to the firm, officials declared.

The arson operation was the first direct on foreign interests in Algeria in a series of criminal fires attributed to armed Muslim fundamentalists bands who have targeted state-owned and private local companies.

Security services said arsonists also destroyed data processing equipment, furniture, a typewriter and archives at a branch of a state-run insurance firm at Oued Al Alleug in the Blida region south of Algiers.

Attacking economic targets is a recent development in the strategy of armed groups that have been waging war on the state and the security forces since the cancellation in January 1992 of a general election the now-outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

A first series of executions of people convicted by the special courts took place on Aug. 31, when seven people were shot on conviction of taking part in a bomb attack on Algiers international airport which killed nine people and injured 123 on Aug. 6 last year.

Six other people condemned by military courts, including two serving army non-commissioned officers, were executed in May.

Since special courts were instituted last February as part of measures to crack down on suspected fundamentalists, they have sentenced 295 people to death — 192 in Algiers, 64 at Oran in the west and 39 in the eastern town of Constantine.

More than half of them, on the run, were convicted and sentenced in their absence. Before the creation of the special courts, martial court and criminal courts sentenced 45 people to death.

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Churchill archives could be sold to U.S. — report

LONDON (AFP) — The personal archives of Winston Churchill could be sold for the United States but talks are under way to keep the thousands of letters and documents in Britain, a newspaper reported. The Observer quoted members of the Churchill family as saying that the Chartwell Trust, which owns the papers, was holding talks with the National Heritage Museum Fund on ways to keep the archives in Britain. Money from any sale would go to the family as well as to maintain the dilapidated Churchill cemetery at Bladon near Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire where the British wartime prime minister was born in 1874. The newspaper said the family "was conscious that American universities would bid many millions for the archives" and that the trustees had a legal duty to ensure a good deal. The papers are kept in Churchill College, Cambridge, and include 30,000 literary documents that could be worth \$5 million (\$7.5 million), the paper said. Reacting to the report a Conservative MP said it would be "a national tragedy" if the documents left the country while a spokesman for the National Heritage Ministry said "the government wants to see the archives remain in the country."

Prince Phillip plays the soccer pools

LONDON (R) — Prince Phillip joins millions of fellow Britons in trying to make a king-sized fortune — by picking the winners in the weekly soccer pools. British tabloid newspapers reported Monday. The papers said royal watcher Andrew Morton, author of a devastating book on Princess Diana, was about to blow the lid on Prince Phillip and penny-pinching royals in a television series. "Prince Phillip — who draws a personal allowance of £359,000 (\$547,000) a year from the civil list — fills in his (soccer betting) coupon every week just like millions of other punters." Today newspaper said of the latest Morton revelations. The pools carry a £2 million (\$3.05 million) jackpot. Prince Philip, husband of Queen Elizabeth, has presented the F.A. Cup at Wembley many times but has never said which soccer team he supports. The Sun said Mr. Morton would reveal other goings-on in the royal household, including saving left-over kippers (smoked herrings) from breakfast to be offered to guests at dinner.

Venezuelan sets Everest record

LONDON (R) — Ramon Blanco, a 60-year-old Venezuelan violin maker, has become the oldest climber to reach the summit of 29,028-foot (8,848 metres) Mount Everest, expedition organisers said. "Blanco and four others reached the summit on Oct. 7, but we've only just received the news," Steve Berry, a director of the Bristol-based agency Himalayan Kingdoms, told Reuters. The previous record was set in 1985 by American Dick Bass, who was 55 at the time. The age of Everest summiteers normally varies from the mid-20s to early 40s. Included in the summit party was GINETTE HARRISON, a doctor, who became the second British woman to reach the highest point on Earth. Journalist Rebecca Stephens completed the climb in May. The agency's clients paid \$32,000, not including air fares, to attempt to climb Everest, which was first scaled in 1953 by Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing Norgay. Himalayan Kingdoms plans to take its second party to Everest next summer.

Altman to film fashion

PARIS (AFP) — U.S. director Robert Altman, who took the lid of Hollywood with The Player, is turning to the world of fashion for his next movie, he announced on Sunday after Sonia Rykiel's show. The film, to be called "Pret-A-Porter" (Ready-To-Wear) will start shooting in Paris in March, during next season's winter collections, and will take most of the summer. Altman said the project had been inspired by his first visit to a Rykiel show 10 years ago.

Pope, Crown Prince hold talks

(Continued from page 1)

The British minister voiced his country's understanding of the role and the economic and social responsibilities shouldered by Jordan with regard to Palestinian refugees.

Mr. Hurd said the United Kingdom was keen on supporting the Jordanian economy and supported a recent call by U.S. President Bill Clinton for reducing Jordan's foreign debt.

Discussion at the meeting covered the implementation of development projects in the region as envisaged by the

donors' conference held in Washington on Oct. 1.

Prince Hassan and the British minister agreed that Jordan's economy was badly affected as a result of the continued siege imposed on the port of Aqaba in the course of enforcing the U.N. embargo on Iraq.

Prince Hassan and Mr. Hurd reaffirmed the need to have comprehensive peace and urged all concerned parties to work towards the achievement of peace based on U.N. resolutions.

Clashes erupt

(Continued from page 1)

abroad about the Israel-PLO peace accord signed on Sept. 13, added the only way to guarantee religious freedom in the city was under Israeli sovereignty.

The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas has called for a strike across the occupied territories Wednesday to protest against the start of Palestinian autonomy the same day.

"October 13 will be a general strike," Hamas announced in slogans painted on the walls of Gaza City.

Oakley meets clan leader

(Continued from page 1)

OSOM have been overshadowed since June by battles between U.S.-led forces and Gen. Aideed's militia, which have left more than 60 U.N. soldiers dead and scores wounded, while hundreds of Somalis have been killed and injured.

The return to Mogadishu of Mr. Oakley, who had initially been sent to Somalia by former U.S. President George Bush, reflects a policy change on the part of the Clinton administration, which has come under strong domestic and foreign pressure both to cut U.S. losses and end the fighting.

An AFP correspondent on Monday saw Mr. Oakley driven in a two-vehicle convoy to the heliport inside the U.N. headquarters in the former U.S. embassy compound, where he was picked up by a Black Hawk helicopter of the U.S. Quick Reaction Force.

Informed sources said the U.S. official was to go to northern Mogadishu to meet Gen. Aideed's foe Ali Mahdi Mohammed, whose faction is among 12 that have proved willing to disarm and cooperate with U.N.-sponsored political efforts.

The Somali capital was calm on the military front apart from a show of strength by newly arrived American AC-130 gunships.

Beilin in Tunis to meet Arafat

(Continued from page 1)

message from Mr. Arafat about the negotiations.

Israeli Ambassador to Egypt David Sultan confirmed that Mr. Peres would lead the Israeli side at the talks which begin the day the peace accord goes into effect.

Mr. Kamal said the meeting would only last one day and would draw up a timetable for the committee's work in the run up to Dec. 13, deadline for signing the formal agreement on the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Another Israeli-Palestinian committee meets Wednesday in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Tabu to discuss security arrangements for the withdrawal.

These delegations will be led by Israel's deputy Chief of Staff General Amnon Shahak and Mr. Arafat's main political advisor Nabil Shaath.

Mr. Peres told parliament Israel had its own refugee issues to raise at the talks and they would not focus only on Palestinian refugees.

"Refugees and demands of refugees, both sides have, not just one side, and the demands of both sides must be considered seriously and comprehensively," Mr. Peres said.

He was alluding to hundreds of thousands of Jews who migrated to Israel from Arab states. It was not clear what Israel's demands would be.

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